The Anglo-Argentine Conflict
Book two

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The Argentine invasion of
The Falklands and
British attempt to recapture
The Islands

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By
Hussein Hassanin

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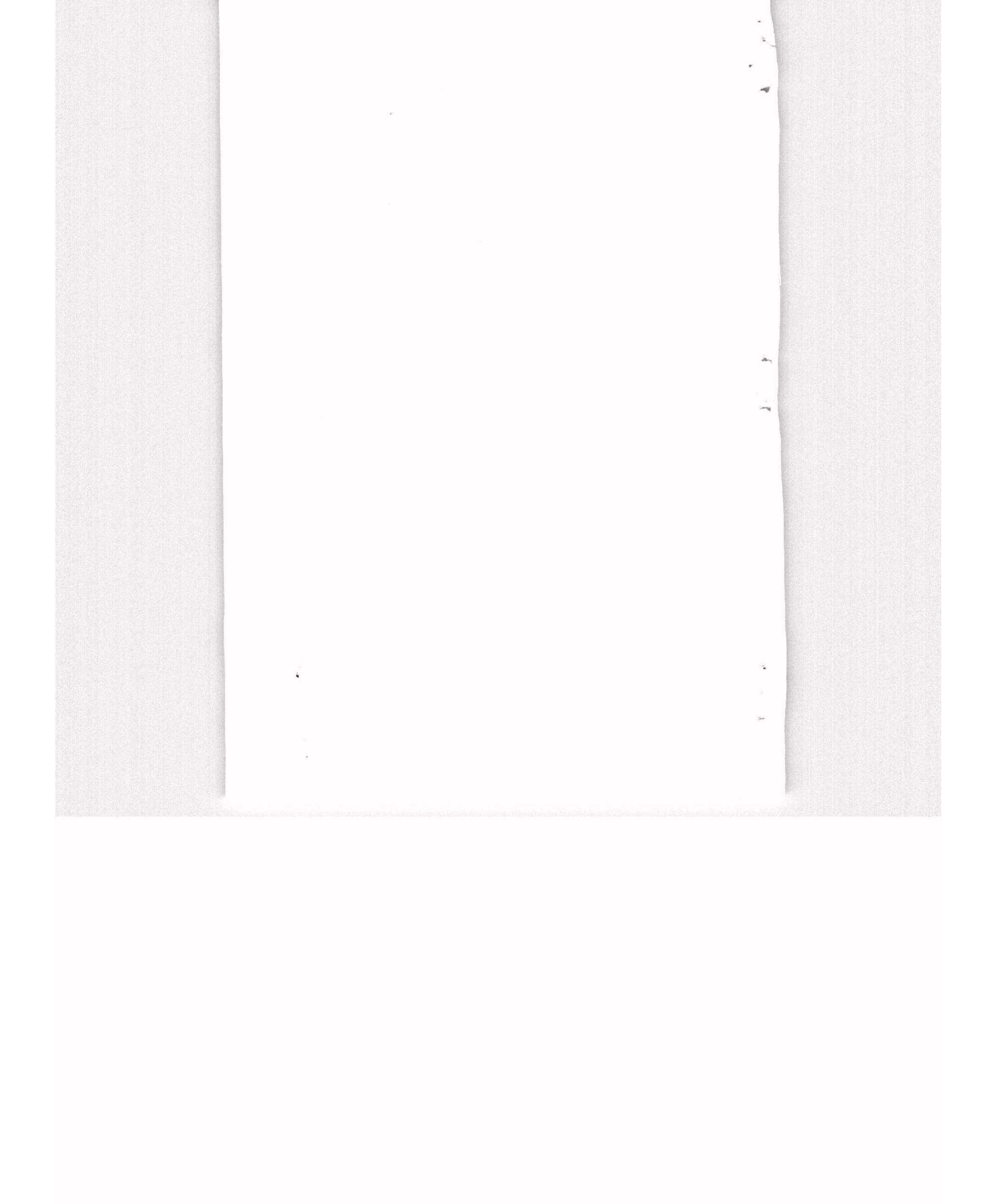
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Chapter five

Searching for Diplomatic Solution

(1)

American Involvement

On April 12th, Mr. Haig arrived in London with an Argentine offer to withdraw its troops from the Falklands, provided Britain recognised Argentine sovereignty over the islands, and ordered an end to its naval blockade and the return of the British task force. Mr. Haig also brought with him a number of U.S. ideas. But both the Argentine and the U.S. proposals fell far short of Mrs. Thatcher's continued demand, in the meantime, there was no change in the British position. As a result, Mr. Haig had to telephone Senor Costa Mendez (the Argentine foreign minister) to tell him Britain was insisting that it will only talk about implementing the UN Security Council Resolution which demanded cessation of hostilities,

withdrawal of the Argentine troops and a diplomatic solution to the problem. Mr. Haig's conversation with Senor Costa Mendez led to a meeting of the Argentine cabinet to discuss the latest stage of the crisis. In the meantime, the atmosphere in Buenos Aires was considerably calmer, and the local press emphasising the likelihood of negotiations getting under way, but at the same time leading Argentine politicians and trade union figures were travelling to Europe and the U.S. to seek support for their country's case in the face of Britain's successful mobilization of government opinion among European neighbours.

The first Peruvian plan.

President Fernando Belaunde Terry of Peru asked Argentina to call an immediate truce of 72 hours to settle its difference with Britain over the islands. Twenty four hours later, the Peruvian Foreign

Minister Mr. Arias Stella told a news conference in Lima that the Argentine Foreign Minister Dr. Costa Mendez had replied affirmatively to the proposal, but Britain was still studying it.

UN Resolution 502 ،

Argentina did not reject the UN Resolution 502 for the withdrawal of Argentine troops from the islands, but in the meantime, she asked Britain to recall its naval task force as a prerequisite to the removal of its own forces from the islands. In a letter which was addressed to Mr. Kamanda Wa Kamanda of Zaire (president of the UN council) Senor Eduardo Roca (the Argentine representative) offered what was clearly an Argentine interpretation of the resolution . The text of the Argentine representative was as follows: (I've the honour to communicate with you, upon express instruction from my government in

connexion with the Security Council Resolution 502 of April 3rd 1982 in order to inform you of the following: the government of the Argentine Republic believes that the operative part of the aforementioned resolution constitutes a text which must be considered as a unified whole. Its paragraphs are so interrelated that it is impossible to take action for partial compliance with one paragraph while ignoring its consequences on other aspects of the situation. Respect for the cessation of hostilities is something to be demanded of both parties, its violation originates with the U.K., which has already sent a large fleet of war to the zone and initiated a naval blockade of the islands; the fleet also includes nuclear submarines. My government is prepared to comply with paragraph 2 on condition that the U.K. fully complies with the provisions of paragraph 1 and does not attempt to use

resolution 502 as an instrument for justifying a return to the previous colonial situation, disregarding Argentina's sovereign rights and the appeals and resolution of this organization urging the end of all colonial situations. Similarly, the government of the U.K. has unilaterally, outside the framework of the Charter of the UN taken a series of measures which constitute economic aggression and it has thereby violated the Charter of economic rights and duties of states (general Assembly resolution 3281). The government of the Argentine republic also wishes to reaffirm its undertaking to consider with an open and receptive mind the situation of 1,800 residents of the islands whose interests Argentina will respect. The Argentine government believes in negotiated diplomatic solution and will exert its best efforts to that end. I should be grateful if you would have this

letter circulated as a matter of urgency as a security council document).

From Brussels it was reported that the European community's decision to ban imports from Argentina was interpreted as a new and dramatic step in EEC policy-making by diplomats. In the case of France and West Germany, initial reservations about the proposed ban were swept aside as a result of decisions taken at a higher level in the national capitals. In fact, Argentina exported goods worth around $ 1,000 m . to the EEC in 1980 of which just under 50% consisted of food such as beef and live animals, a further 24% of imports consisted of non-edible crude materials such as oil-seeds and hides. Indeed ,The EEC common agricultural policy which produces a surplus of beef has tended to squeeze out imports of Argentine food in recent years, but in the non-edible crude materials

sector, Argentina was an important supplier of oil-seeds such as soya beans to France, Italy, the Netherlands and West Germany, while Argentine hides were an important raw material for the Italian footwear industry. So the Italians and Irish had claimed that the ban on hide imports would hurt their shoe-making industries. It was believed also that, the import ban could have a great significance if (as reported from Buenos Aires on April 13th 1982) Argentina should retaliate by banning goods made in the EEC which has grown steadily in importance over the past six years as a market for EEC goods, buying in particular machinery and transport equipment which account for about 55% of EEC sales to Argentina . Argentina was an important market for West Germany whose companies had invested about DM 1,000 m ($ 230 m.) in the country since 1952; and

Italy which was also a major investor in Argentina and has close ties with the large Italian community in the country, Were affected by the EEC decisions to ban the sale of arms and military equipment.

On April 14th, Mrs. Thatcher told the commons emergency session on the Falkland islands crisis that Britain was prepared to use the military strength in order to strengthen its diplomatic efforts, and if any Argentine warships or naval auxiliaries challenged the 200-miles exclusion zone established by Britain around the islands, the British government would take that as the clearest evidence that the search for a peaceful solution had been abandoned; she added: "we shall then take the necessary action, Let no one doubt that". She went on to say that the British government in any negotiations over the coming days would insist on the Argentine withdrawal from the

Falkland islands and dependencies and the wishes of the islanders should remain paramount.

In fact, the declaration of an exclusion zone around the islands was seen by the British government as the first step towards achieving the withdrawal of Argentine forces. In the meantime, Labour, and Liberal front-bench speakers gave the task force their continued backing.

On the other side of the Atlantic, Argentina announced that the door is still open to a negotiated settlement. At the same time, the government of Argentina had proposed a transitional government to administer the Falklands while a permanent solution was being considered; this transitional body would have (from the Argentine point of view) an Argentine governor, British officials and representatives from member states of the UN or of the OAS; moreover,

Argentina had offered Britain participation in the economic exploitation of the Falklands and a guarantee of Argentine naval support for Britain in any future East-West conflict in which the Southern Atlantic was involved, but the Argentines said that any settlement would have to be worked out on the basis of British recognition of Argentine sovereignty over the Falklands and that has proved to be the sticking point.

From Washington, however, it was reported that president Reagan had renewed hopes of a peaceful solution of the Falklands by declaring that he was sending Mr. Haig back to Buenos Aires as a fair broker; here he said: We would like to see the Soviet Union butt out of the Falklands dispute.

Back to Buenos Aires, it was reported that the Argentine newspaper La Razon said an Argentine

plan would be put to Mr. Haig when he returns to Buenos Aires. The plan was based on the following points: (1)The Falklands must have an Argentine governor; (2)The Argentine flag must be kept flying; (3)Argentine sovereignty is not negotiable; (4)The Islanders will enjoy the same rights and obligations whether they are of British decent or came from Argentina; (5)Return of the British fleet to base and withdrawal of the Argentine forces from the islands.

From Brussels, it was reported that the EEC decided finally to ban all Argentine imports into the EEC from April 17th 1982 (except for shipments already contracted with European importers), but the ban was to last only one month and it will then need a new political decision by the Common Market governments to be renewed. In fact, the British government had originally wanted no specific time

limit on the ban, also the EEC failed to agree on a British demand to have Argentina excluded from the Common Market's favourable trade generalized system of preferences. Indeed, from the beginning some EEC governments were quietly making it known that in taking this stand they were not giving Mrs. Thatcher an open cheque either for British sovereignty claims or for her conduct of confrontation with Argentina; moreover, the EEC expected Mrs. Thatcher and her government to moderate their demands on a long term rebate on Britain's contributions to the common market budget.

On April 15th, it was reported from London that the opposition parties had committed to supporting Mrs. Thatcher's decision to dispatch the task force and for the demand to withdraw the Argentine troops; moreover, about 60% of the British public said they

were satisfied with the way the government was handling the Falkland Islands (according to an opinion poll published by MORI). Meanwhile, British tactics continued to tighten the screws on the Argentine through diplomatic means such as (international opinion, economic sanctions and the threat of a military response heightened daily as the task force approaches the Falklands).

But in Argentina the picture was quite different; the Welsh – Argentine society wrote to the Secretary of Wales Mr. Nicholas Edwards and the British Foreign Secretary Mr. Pym expressing concern about the Angle – Argentine conflict. They passed a resolution which recognized the economic ties between the Falklands and Argentina and the historic links between Wales and Argentina, also they condemned the launching of the British task force, and here, they

said: It would be intolerable if a situation was allowed to arise in which Welsh soldiers in the British Army and Welsh soldiers in the Argentine Army were told to kill one another. Moreover, the British and Angle-Argentine community in Argentina sent another urgent plea to Mrs. Thatcher calling for restraint in the dispute over the Falkland islands; in the telegram which was drawn up at a special meeting of the British Chamber of Commerce in Buenos Aires, they declared that if the crisis led to hostilities, could irreparably damage British investment in the country which amounted to hundreds of millions of pounds. The telegram to Mrs. Thatcher spoke of the generations of Britons who have chosen to work and live in Argentina where they found respect and even admiration for British values and way of life, and now that long tradition of friendship was at stake; the

Chamber also believed there was a lack of awareness in Britain of the sincerity and intensity of the feeling of the Argentina people on the Falklands issue and of their frustration after 17 years of fruitless talks. Finally, the message asked Mrs. Thatcher to refrain from the use of force and to seek negotiations.

(2)

Soviet involvement

The U.S. was actively aiding British military preparations to retake the islands, and U.S. officials had privately confirmed that American intelligence sharing with Britain included aerial surveillance, intercepts and the information from secret agents, in widespread cooperation that dates back to the 1939 – 45 war; moreover, the white house was helping Britain communicate via satellite with the British fleet heading for the Falkland and with British nuclear

submarines, and other help was being given in the form of fuel supplies provided at the American base on the British owned Ascension island. But there was concern in Washington that if the U.S. mediation fail, a U.S – .Soviet confrontation could emerge in the south Atlantic with America backing Britain and the Russians supporting Argentina . In fact ,Argentina had strong ties with the Soviet Union being Moscow's largest supplier of grain and receiving enriched Soviet Uranium for its nuclear programme, whereas U.S. military aid to Argentina was cut off by former president Carter in 1977 because of Argentina's appalling record on human rights .

The Soviet Union was stepping up its strident condemnation of Mrs. Thatcher's handling of the crisis, and they argued that Mrs. Thatcher had seized on the Falkland islands crisis to deflect public

attention from domestic problems such as unemployment and inflation, also they had provided her with justification for the government's militarist course and the expenditure of billions of pounds on Trident and Cruise missiles.

In the meantime, it was reported from China that the Chinese newspapers called for restraint and urged Britain and Argentina to seek a settlement of the Malvinas issue (in fact, the Chinese no longer recognise the name Falklands) in a reasonable and equitable manner. Indeed, the Chinese authorities could not openly oppose general Galtieri, but they argued that Argentina belonged to the third world of which China considered itself a part; moreover, Argentina's claims has been supported by the non-aligned movement which China supported and had been recognized in the UN's decolonization

resolutions. China also had another reason for associating itself with Argentina which is parallel with its claim of sovereignty over Taiwan and Hong Kong, and if the day were to come when China decide to use force to establish its claim, it could hardly afford to set a precedent in opposing Argentina's seizure of the Falklands.

From Latin America, it was reported that Venezuela was studying the possibility of economic sanctions against Britain as the support grew for stronger action in favour of Argentina's claim on the islands; however, a British embassy spokesman said that sanctions have been mentioned during recent contracts with the governing Copei Party which indicated that these could be applied in the event of a further serious deterioration in the dispute. Meanwhile, the Brazilian military had been irritated

by Mrs. Thatcher's letter to the President Gen. Figueiredo in which she asked Brazil to persuade Argentina to obey the UN Security Council resolution 502. The British letter described by the Brazilians as hard and harsh in style and was seen by the Brazilians military as cool and arrogant. In fact, Brazil would (if asked) have given Argentina support by supplying ammunition, food and other material on a nonprofit making basis.

On April 18th, it was reported from Buenos Aires that Mr. Haig tried to persuade the military junta to postpone the question of sovereignty over the Falklands, therefore, he proposed an interim peace settlement under which Britain and Argentina would establish a join civil administration on the islands while peace negotiations were conducted. He also suggested December 31st 1982 as a loose deadline for

finding a long-term solution. But the Argentines, however, seemed in on mood for compromise on the sovereignty question, but in the meantime, they had offered to withdraw all troops from the Falklands if the British fleet returns home, and they offered to share any oil may be found in the region .

Mr. Haig, left Buenos Aires for Washington with fresh proposals from the Argentine military junta; these proposals consisted of the following points: (1) joint Anglo-Argentine administration; (2) A council half elected by the islanders and half appointed by the Argentines; (3) A joint police force; (4) Sovereignty to be negotiated at the UN within a set time (perhaps by the end of 1982); (5) The U.S. to oversee the process of settlement of the dispute; (6) Withdrawal of troops from the islands to a 400-mile limit.

So, it was clear that the Argentine's position began to soften after three days of negotiations with Mr. Haig. In London, however, it was quite a different story. Mrs. Thatcher issued a statement from downing street even before a meeting of her was cabinet had ended its examination of the Haig proposals. She described these proposals as complex and difficult. She said that they were at first sight unable to meet the British demand that the wishes of the islanders should be paramount. Mrs. Thatcher went on to say: We shall be studying the proposals carefully, and shall be getting in touch again with Mr. Haig. Mrs. Thatcher and her immediate advisers spent an hour examining the details of the plan which were described as wholly new and different from anything that had been offered in the earlier stages of Mr. Haig's shuttle negotiations. Finally, Mrs. Thatcher called in senior

Ministers for a late night meeting to discuss the plan, and in addition to the obvious members of her war cabinet an extra minister present at the downing street session was Mr. Cecil Parkinson (Chairman of the Conservative Party) which by his attendance underlined the crucial political significance of the crisis for the survival of the government. In fact, Mr. Parkinson was understood to have advised Mrs. Thatcher and her three top colleagues (Mr. Nott, Mr. Pym, and Mr. William Whitelaw) that the Conservative Party opinion was wholly behind the dispatch of the naval task force to the South Atlantic and would support the use of force to restore British sovereignty and administration over the islands.

Meanwhile .it was reported from New York that there was an abundance of ideas being floated in London, Buenos Aires and Washington concerning a UN role

in the Falklands settlement . So ,high – level UN officials had drawn up about 15 blueprints in case the Organization should be called upon, however, the ideas being most widely circulated were: (1) Peace-keeping forces, such as Lebanon, the Golan Heights and Cyprus; (2) Direct Administration such as, the Netherlands New Guniea "now known as West Irian" which became under Jakarta's control;(3) Trusteeship;(4)Supervision 'UN" under a multinational administration; (5) Sovereignty negotiated under UN auspices; (6) Mediation.

From Moscow ,the Soviet newspaper "Pravda" described the West's support for Britain over the islands as amazing, and suggested the attempt to prevent the return of the islands to Argentina contradicted Western declaration renouncing còlonialism; the newspaper added : the European

Community was backing Britain's attempts to recover the territory through military force, and endorsed Argentina's description of economic sanctions as blatant economic aggression. "As for the U.S "Pravda added" the Americans were in no way neutral in the dispute, and the American duplicity was becoming increasingly clear with every passing day, and when the British armada set off for the South Atlantic the Pentagon had given it every assistance, supplying it with data on the weather and the Argentine fleet and putting the American base on Ascension island at British disposal. Pravda went on to say the American proposal to set up a tripartite administration in the Falklands was an attempt to consolidate the American military presence in the islands, as in the Middle East, under a multinational screen.

On April 20th, it was announced in London that the Argentine peace plan for the Falklands fell short of British aims in some important respects, and the British Foreign Secretary Mr. Pym was to fly to Washington to put British peace proposals. But from Buenos Airs there was a sense of disappointment which spread through Argentina at Britain's prompt rejection of what Buenos Aires had hoped was the beginning of a process of negotiation in the Falklands dispute.

It was clear that Argentina's position began to soften, even with talks deadlocked, Argentina had hoped that its offer to delay its demand for sovereignty would find an encouraging response in London. Here,Dr. Costa Mendez said "the delay in the claim for full sovereignty could be postponed for a limited period only during which the alternatives needed for the

definitive solution will be considered and negotiated ."

Argentina, therefore, decided to request to the OAS to meet and to decide whether Argentina could invoke the 1947 Inter-American Treaty of reciprocal assistance. The OAS voted overwhelmingly in favour of an Argentine request to invoke 1947 Rio Treaty, and the decision was taken by a vote of 18-0 at an emergency session of the organization's permanent council, with the U.S., Colombia and Trinidad and Tobago abstaining. Those who voted for the Argentine resolution were Bolivia, Brazil, Costa Rica, Chile, Ecuador, El-Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, Dominican Republic, Uruguay, Venezuela and Paraguay as well as Argentina. Moreover, the Foreign Ministers of the 21 signatories of the Treaty were to meet at the organization's headquarters in Washington on April

26th to consider possible collective action against Britain in response to what Senor Rual Quijano (the Argentine representative) described as a return to gunboat diplomacy.

In Britain, however, the wave of military hysteria sweeping the country over the Falklands crisis was causing concern among peace groups (it was almost a 1956 Suez atmosphere) . Mr. Bruce Kent (the General Secretary of the Campaign for nuclear disarmament) told a press conference in London that part of the task force heading for the Falklands was carrying nuclear weapons, and he blamed the British press for creating a nationalistic mood similar to the atmosphere in Britain at the time of the Suez crisis.

From Brussels, it was reported that the governments of the EEC reiterated their complete solidarity with Britain in the Falkland islands dispute, but failed to

include backing for possible British use of military force against Argentina.

On April 21st 1982, the U.S. officials announced that the gap between Britain and Argentina was very wide and that neither side was showing much flexibility at this stage. In fact, the Argentines had shown some flexibility on the Sovereignty issue by offering to accept a form of joint British-Argentine-American administration of the islands for a limited period until Argentine sovereignty is recognized, but there had been no sign that Mrs. Thatcher was prepared to compromise on her insistence that a settlement guarantees the right of the islanders to decide their own future.

In the meantime, it was reported that, the U.S. Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan submitted a resolution to the Senate calling on the U.S. to embargo

trade with Argentina until such time as Argentina implements UN Security Council Resolution 502 or the British government declares that the crisis be otherwise resolved. Indeed, the resolution was a tactical move designed to increase pressure on the Administration to take Britain's side in the dispute.

On April 22nd, President Galtieri of Argentina flew to the Falkland islands to review preparations for a British blockade or counter-attack, and while he was there he said: "I'm convinced that the blue and white flag of Argentina will never come down from the Malvinas". He added: we really want a peaceful settlement and we have warm hearts but what is needed now is cool heads, the British may defeat us but they cannot break our spirits, and our material things may be destroyed but our spirits cannot be broken.

In London, Mr. Wedgwood Benn (Labour Party) urged all who opposed war with Argentina to speak out clearly against it. He said: "The poison of nationalism and militarism which had already been released in Britain would go on spreading, and the time to mobilize against this is now before the first shots are fired. He went on to say that the British cabinet after obtaining the support of the Security Council had turned its back on the UN and Britain would be isolated in the world community for making war instead of going through the UN. But in the meantime, the Conservative MPs (about 50 members of the Bow Group) had been flying to America to drum up support for Britain in the Falkland crisis. In the meantime, Mrs. Thatcher had called on the experience of Sir Michael Palliser (who retired as permanent secretary to the Foreign Office on March

1982) as an adviser to her War Cabinet. It was believed that the British government had set April 26th as the deadline for using military force to resolve the Falklands crisis if last-minute diplomatic maneuvers failed. Anyhow, Mrs. Thatcher was reported that she went to naval headquarters in Northwood (Middlesex) for a final briefing from the Fleet's commander-in-Chief and his staffs, and she indicated her interest in South Georgia which was the most attractive of the military options open to her.

Meanwhile, the British government issued a strong warning to British nationals to leave Argentina. And from London the Foreign Office announced that it would send a warning to British nationals living in Argentina to be broadcast three times a night for the next three nights on the BBC world service advising them to leave the country by normal commercial

transport (the message said: The task force is approaching the Falklands area and predicts a period of increasing tension and risks for all British citizens in Argentina).

Chapter six

British retake of South Georgia

(1)

U.S. backs Britain

The first indications of a deepening crisis over the Falkland Islands came early on April 24th with the news that Britain had established a defensive area around the naval task force which had been under surveillance by Argentine aircraft for several days. Moreover, the British Ministry of Defence in London issued the following statement: "In this connection her majesty's government wishes to make clear that any approach on the part of Argentine warships including submarines, naval auxiliaries or military aircraft which could amount to a threat to interfere with the mission of British forces in the South Atlantic will encounter the appropriate response. Also, all Argentine aircraft including civil aircraft engaging in

surveillance of these British forces will be regarded as hostile and are liable to be dealt with accordingly".

From Buenos Aires, it was reported that the British troops landed by helicopter Round Grytviken (the Antarctic island's main settlement) at about 11pm. April 24th, attacked an Argentine submarine laying on the surface in Grytviken harbour and launched an assault on South Georgia itself. The attack on the submarine took place while it was unloading supplies for 30 scrap merchants dismantling a disused whaling station. Argentina, described the British attack as a violation of UN Security Council Resolution 502 on the Falklands dispute.

On the diplomatic front, Dr. Costa Mendez who flew to Washington for talks with Mr. Haig and to attend meeting of the OAS announced that his talks with Mr. Haig were postponed indefinitely. He added:

Britain and Argentina are technically at war, but in the meantime, there is never an end to diplomacy.

At the same time, it was reported in the front page of the new York times that, high-ranking American officials had indicated that the U.S. would back Britain against Argentina if negotiations failed ،and the support would include America joining an embargo on Argentine goods but not the use of American forces. But Mr. john tower (Chairman of the powerful Senate Armed services Committee) urged the Reagan administration to send naval units to support the Royal Navy task force in the South Atlantic.

In fact, Security council Resolution 502 on the Falklands crisis made it clear that the UN would not sanction the use of force or the threat of force as a means to settle the dispute ,and that was why it called

for the withdrawal of the Argentine troops and for serious negotiation .In the meantime, the Security Council did not give the British government the right to retake the islands by force .Also ,the UN itself had made it clear that it did not accept Britain's claims to sovereignty, and when the UN called for talks on the issue between Argentina and Britain in 1965, the Falklands were expressly referred to as a relic of the colonial era .Moreover, British governments have effectively blocked those talks ever since by refusing to make any concessions on the question of sovereignty.

On April 26th, it was reported from London that the British domestic news agency, press Association, quoted government sources were saying that British troops could go into action again within 48 hours to establish a bridgehead in a remote part of the Falklands.In the meantime, Mrs. Thatcher announced

that time is getting extremely short as the task force approaches the islands, and she blamed Argentine for the failure to reach a settlement by saying: "we did not break the peace". In fact, MPs from all sides of the House supported Mrs. Thatcher, especially her decision to recapture South Georgia.

Mr. Pym(the British Foreign Secretary) and his senior advisers said that the next round of diplomatic negotiations over the Falklands is likely to end in deadlock. In fact, the expected deadlock was not seen by the Pym team as disaster but rather an opportunity to open the way for the U.S. administration to join the EEC in the trade embargo against Argentina (the embargo operated by Britain and her EEC partners together with three Commonwealth governments" New Zealand, Canada and Australia" had denied Argentina about 26% of her normal export sales). But

there was growing apprehension among Britain's EEC allies that the outbreak of fighting in the South Atlantic might prolong and complicate the search for a diplomatic solution to the conflict over the Falkland islands. But, the EEC governments were anxious for the earliest possible peaceful solution to the Falklands crisis, and some of them were looking forward to seeing the problem handled by the UN.

From new York, the Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar in an effort to save world peace announced that: "In view of the further armed exchange between Argentine and British forces which had taken place over South Georgia island; he added: I appeal to both parties to comply immediately with the provisions of Security Council Resolution 502 and to refrain from any action that would broaden further the conflict

which might threaten serious consequences for world peace .

Argentina's representative at the UN Mr. Eduardo Roca complained to the Security Council that Britain had perpetrated an act of armed aggression against the South Georgia Island which formed part of Argentine territory using naval units and helicopters, and the British attack was carried out at a time when negotiations undertaken with the participation of the U.S. Secretary Mr. Haig were still open.

In Washington, however, Argentina took steps to make a good military defeat in the South Georgia with a resounding diplomatic victory in the OAS. Just before the session ,the Argentine permanent delegate Mr. Rual Quijano said that Buenos Aires was not seeking military aid or sanctions against Britain but

basically solidarity form the fellow members of the OAS.

On April 28th, Britain escalated its military pressure on Argentina with the announcement that it would impose a total sea and air blockade around the Falkland islands. The announcement of the blockade which applied to all ships and planes, civil and military of all nations came as both countries weighed a last-minute peace plan submitted by the U.S. Secretary of State Mr. Haig. The U.S. proposals, however, included the following points:

(1) Cessation of hostilities and withdrawal of both Argentine and British forces; (2)Termination of sanction imposed by the EEC and other nations against Argentina;(3) Establishment of an America-British-Argentine interim authority on the islands to maintain the agreement;(4) Continuation of the

traditional local administration on the Falklands with the addition of Argentine participation; (5) procedures for encouraging co-operation on development of the islands; (6) A framework for negotiations on a final settlement taking into account the interests of both sides and the wishes of the inhabitants.

Argentine reaction was to say that the U.S. plan was unacceptable because it made no reference to recognition of Argentine sovereignty over the Islands, but at the same time, President Galtieri said that, the U.S. proposals were being studied and all diplomatic channels for negotiation remained open.

In London, however, Mrs. Thatcher opened an emergency debate in the House of Commons (the fourth since Argentina invaded the islands four weeks age) with a reaffirmation of her view that gentle

persuasion is not going to make the Argentine government give up what it had seized by force. Mrs. Thatcher also rejected demands from the opposition that she should turn to the UN or to the international Court of Justice in an attempt to avoid war. However, her tone sounded to many members of parliament slightly less intransigent than on other recent occasions. Indeed, She was noncommittal, rather than hostile in discussing the peace proposals of the U.S., but she moved to bring matters even closer to the brink by announcing that a 200-mile air and sea (total exclusion zone) would be imposed by the British fleet around the Falklands from 11am. On April 29th. Here, the British Defence Ministry statement said "Any ship or aircraft, whether military or civil which is found within this zone without due authority from the Ministry of Defence in London will be regarded as

operating in support of the illegal occupation and will therefore be regarded as hostile and will be liable to attack by British forces.

Fore Washington, the OAS voted to approve a resolution recognizing Argentine sovereignty over the islands and calling on Britain to cease all hostilities in the south Atlantic. The resolution which urged both governments to call an immediate truce was passed 17 to 0, with the U.S., Chile and Trinidad abstaining.

On April 30th, the U.S. came down firmly on the side of Britain over the Falklands crisis by announcing economic and military sanctions against Argentina, and offering material support for British forces. The U.S. statement which announced after an emergency meeting of the national security council at the white House included the following points:

(1)Suspension of all military exports to Argentina; (2) Withholding of certification of Argentine eligibility for the U.S. military sales; (3) Suspension of new export-import bank credits and guarantees; (4) Suspension of commodity credit corporation guarantees. However, Mr. Haig added to the statement that president Reagan has also directed that the U.S. will respond positively to requests for material support for British forces, but there will be no direct U.S. involvement .Moreover Mr. Haig said ,Britain is our closest ally and Mrs. Thatcher had shown complete understanding for the U.S. position. In fact,the U.S. decision to come down on Britain's side with military and economic sanctions did disturb the climate for extensive American business interests in Argentina (such as Ford with $ 1.9 billion of sales, Exxon with $ 1.2 billion of sales, and IBM with some $ 346 million).

The American decision to support Britain with sanctions seemed to have sustained the fragile party truce at Westminister. At any rate, Mrs. Thatcher was said to be sorry for the breakdown but delighted with the extent of American support and in the retention of bipartisanship at home. In the meantime, MPs of all the major parties seemed agreed that the American move strengthened the strategy of stepping up pressure upon the Argentine junta.

In Argentina, the anti-U.S. feeling which has never been very far below the surface as elsewhere in Latin American has grown steadily, and a demonstration in support of Argentine sovereignty over the Falklands quickly became a rally against Yankee imperialism as anything .In fact,President Reagan was facing a major strategic dilemma; on the one hand, he wished to preserve his Latin American strategy which based

upon the manipulation of reactionary fascist regimes in south American; and on the other hand , he wished to maintain good relation with his most reliable ally in western Europe "Mrs. Thatcher" on whom he depended to rally the other NATO governments in the face of growing popular opposition to his plans for limited nuclear war based on the Cruise and Pershing missiles. In effect, he chose NATO, despite the problems this would create in Latin America of the boost it would give to the developing movement against the continued domination of the continent by U.S. imperialism and the fascist regimes through which it operates. But in the long term, the consequences of that choice could only undermines the position of U.S. imperialism on its own back door. Moreover, the U.S. would be seen to be ganging up against a third-world country to deny it the

satisfaction of its national rights embodied in the claim to sovereignty over the Falklands and elsewhere in Latin American.

Indeed,the Argentine claim to sovereignty would remain because it is a national issue arising from the seizure of the islands from Argentina at the time of the expansion of the British empire soon after Argentina gained its independence from Spain ; but sooner or later Argentine sovereignty would have to be conceded.

Back to south Georgia: the decision to invade south Georgia had been made by the British government before the Foreign Secretary Mr. Pym flew to Washington on April 22nd for his talks with Mr. Haig, and by the time he was ready to return to London, he knew that the attack was only two days away, therefore, it was clear that Mr. Pym imparted this

devastating piece of information to Mr. Haig. Indeed , there was no doubt that the Americans did learn that an attack was imminent, and despite the delicate stage of negotiations they raised no objections.

Once again, on April 30th, Mr. Pym at a press conference gave strong encouragement to the view that no military intervention was likely in the next couple of days, but in fact this pattern of behaviour (deliberately aimed to create a quiet lull) reproduced almost exactly what had happened before the invasion of South Georgia.

World option:

There was universal bitterness not only in Argentina but in most of Latin American countries whether in or out of the governments about Mr. Haig's mediation followed by what was seen as an betrayal when he

openly sided with Britain and imposed economic sanctions on Argentina .

The U.S. had no enduring stake in the political survival of Mrs. Thatcher, but it did have an abiding interest in making certain she was not replaced in circumstances that weaken the British commitment to NATO and the Alliance. It was also believed that a British humiliation at the hands of a third world country like Argentina would release a wave of anti-Americanism in Britain, and in such an atmosphere, the U.S. which already finds its policies in NATO under attack throughout western Europe might suddenly encounter opposition from a new and unexpected source "Britain" . Anyhow,the first casualty of President Reagan's decision to side openly with Britain in the Falkland islands dispute was his hope of enlisting Argentina as an ally in the U.S.

campaign to stop the spread of Communism in the Western Hemisphere. So, as one of Latin America's major military powers, Argentina had figured prominently in the planning of U.S. policy-makers who viewed it as playing a potential leadership role in strategic ventures ranging from naval vigilance over the South Atlantic to the support and training of anti-Communist forces throughout Central America. As a result, the Americans would perhaps lose Argentines cooperation in this effort; moreover, Mr .Reagan's allegiance was affecting U.S. relations with the rest of Latin America. It was believed that most of Latin American governments expressed their solidarity with Argentina by adopting an attitude of coolness toward any initiatives that bear a made in Washington stamp. In fact, the real danger to the U.S. policy goals was that the Falklands crisis might cause various

realignments in the balance of political forces within Latin America and could leave the Reagan administration increasingly isolated as it searched for allies willing to lend either concrete or moral support to the policies it was pursuing in Central America.

(2)

The British attack of Stanley airport And Goose Green

On May 1st 1982 , it was reported that a single delta winged Vulcan bomber flying 3,500 miles from Ascension island and refueled en route by airborne tanker planes dropped 21 " 1.000 – pound bombs" on the runway of the Falklands largest airfield at Stanley on the eastern coast of East Falkland; and two hours later, British Harrier jets raided the Stanley airport and a grass airstrip at Goose Green. As a result, the Argentine junta in a communiqué condemned the

British attacks as a flagrant violation of resolution 502 of the UN Security Council . After the British attack, the Argentine Foreign Minister Dr. Costa Mendez said that: there are two answers to all aggressions of this type, one military and the other diplomatic. He added: we have already given our military answer and we are still trying the diplomatic. Twenty four hours later (May 2nd) the Argentine President called a special cabinet meeting to brief his ministers on the fighting and to study Argentine's next moves on the military and diplomatic fronts. In the meantime, the Argentine demonstrators in Buenos Aires were chanting "British murderers outside the presidential palace and drove through the city tooting car horns in support of Argentina.

At the UN, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar (the UN Secretary General) summoned his Falklands crisis

committee for the first time in New York to review options for a peaceful solution as British forces stepped up the military pressure. However, while the UN meeting was taking place, Mr. Pym was discussing further military measures with Mr. Haig in Washington. Mr. Pym said afterwards: It has been our strategy all through to build up pressure on the Argentines to show them that aggression doesn't pay. Pym added: the build up of that pressure is continuing. In fact, Mr. Pym's tough talk both before and after meeting Mr. Haig did not give rise to any optimism among UN officials that the Foreign Secretary was really prepared to have meaningful talks about a UN participation to find a peaceful solution to the crisis (especially when he said: I came here last week to negotiate with Mr. Haig as a

mediator, and I've come back this week to consult with him as an ally) .

However, while the Argentines accused the British task force of having endangered the civilian population of the Falkland islands by raiding against Argentine positions on the islands, the British representative to the U0N Sir Anthony Parsons claimed in a letter to the Secretary Council that bombing of the airstrip on the Falklands was a legitimate exercise of the right of self-defence under the UN charter, and he claimed that the strike was necessary because Argentina had ignored a UN request for the immediate withdrawal of its troops from the Falklands.

Finally , a statement issued by a UN spokesman said they reviewed the situation and expressed profound concern over the Falklands hostilities.

On May 3rd, it was reported that, the Argentine cruiser general Belgrano was bout 36 miles out died the total exclusion zone when it was hit and sunk by the British hunter-killer nuclear-power submarine "HMS Conqueror". The Argentine cruiser 43-year old, and 13,645- ton tried to limp home, but foundered in a storm after some of its crew had taken to the lifeboats.

The sinking of the Argentine cruiser was vigorously defended by Mrs. Thatcher in the house of Common when she said: "The cruiser had posed a very obvious threat to the British task force, and might well have sunk some Royal Navy ships if had not been attacked first. At any rate ,Mrs. Thatcher offered no apology for the sinking of the Argentine cruiser.

In Argentina, the anti-American feeling grew as the government announced that the U.S. had helped

Britain to sink the Argentine cruiser general Belgrano. In the meantime, apprehension ran through the diplomatic community after reports of a strong exchange between Argentine intelligence officers and U.S. Embassy staff. The exchange reportedly came after Argentina had accused Washington of supplying satellite information to the British submarine which sank the Belgrano. As a result, the U.S. embassy announced that lower ranked personnel and their families would be leaving the country. In the meantime, U.S, sources said that since the British attack on South Georgia (two weeks earlier) most U.S. embassy files had been destroyed and only day-to-day records were being kept.

As for Europe, West European governments reacted with shock and dismay to the sinking of the Argentine cruiser general Belgrano, and from several European

capitals, harsh statements called for an end to the hostilities ،also suggesting that Britain was no longer blameless in the Falklands crisis ،From Copenhagen (Denmark) the Foreign Minister Mr. Kjeld Olesen said: "Further loss of life must be avoided, and both parties must put prestige aside and concentrate on the negotiated solution. But from Oslo (Norway) the Foreign Minister strongly regretted the casualties caused by the sinking of the Argentine cruiser and said he hoped that the parties will make serious attempts at obtaining a negotiated solution that may prevent further loss of life. And in Rome, the Italian Foreign Minister Mr. Emilio Colombo urged the UN Secretary-General Mr. Javier Peres de Cuellar to take a new initiative, "the first step of which must be a ceasefire agreement between the two parties" he said", and the only way that Britain and Argentina

could both emerge victorious was through a negotiated settlement of their dispute" he added. From West Germany, however, it was reported that the deaths of Argentine sailors from the Belgrano shocked the people of West Germany and lost Britain much of its dwindling sympathy. In fact , the West German people appeared to have lost any enthusiasm they may have had for the British cause especially after the British attack on the airfield at Port Stanley, but even before then, public sympathy for the British position was undermined by a BBC film "Germany and the Argentine Bomb". The film presented by the BBC as "a chilling scoop" alleged that Argentina would soon be in a position to build the atomic bomb "thanks to help from old Nazis and a secret deal with West Germany". However, reaction to the film in Germany was swift, and the first to comment was Mr.

Lothar Ruehl (a government spokesman) who described the film as a political detective story but no documentary.

In Ireland, the Irish government announced moves to seek a Falklands ceasefire after a cabinet meeting . The move by Ireland, however, came as widespread concern was being voiced in many EEC capitals at the escalation of fighting in the South Atlantic and at the loss of life following the sinking of the Belgraon , also political directors from each of the EEC countries met behind very closed door in the grounds of the Belgian government's Val Duchesse reception centre on the outskirts of Breussels to discuss the events. As a result, the Irish government called on the Security Council, of which Ireland was a member, to prepare a new resolution urging: (1) Immediate cessation of hostilities by both Britain and Argentine forces; (2)

Negotiation of a diplomatic settlement under UN auspices.

From Latin America, it was reported that Dr. Javier Arias Stella (the Foreign Minister of Peru) said that Peru would give Argentina all the help it needs or asks for, (IN FACT, three days earlier, a top level military delegation had arrived in Lima from Buenos Aires for talks with President Belaunde, the war minister Gen. Luis Cisneros and the Navy Minister Adm. Jose Carvajal, and the results of these discussions had been shrouded in secrecy, and the Peruvian government had consistently denied that the Russian – built Sukhoi – 22 fighters of the Peruvian air force have been sent to Argentina). However, the Peruvian government's official line on the Falklands crisis had been to promote peace talks, but public opinion was heavily on the side of Argentina, bolstered by the

traditionally strong links between the two countries which derive in part from a mutual hostility towards Chile, and increasingly the government had openly come to back the Argentine cause. In Lima , the Argentine sympathizers had set up a support group to coordinate solidarity activities, and the state airline Aeroperu had agreed to transport medicines and food to Argentina collected by the committee. Added to this the flight controllers at Lima airport were continuing their boycott of the twice-weekly British Caledonian flight from London.

Peru also formally protested to Britain over the sinking of the cruiser General Belgrano, and it was believed that there was increasing pressure from Peru's nationalistic armed forces for the government to take a more committed Pro-Argentine line.

From Panama, it was reported that a Panamanian Foreign Ministry official said that Panama and Venezuela hoped to organize a meeting of Latin American Foreign Ministers to strengthen their support for Argentina, and both governments had been in constant touch over the past three days to arrange the meeting which would also consider imposing sanctions against Britain, but at the same time President Aristedes of Panama said that the forces of both countries (Britain and Argentina) should be withdrawn from and around the Falklands so that talks could begin while an international peace force policed the islands. He added: but the negotiation and the halt of hostilities must have as a fundamental principle Britain's recognition of Argentina's sovereignty over the Malvinas islands.

In the meantime, It was reported from Venezuela that Gen. Bernardo Leal (Venezuela's Minister of Defence) said that talks were taking place about providing spare parts and equipment " principally for the Argentinian air force " and specifically about spares for Argentine's fleet of Mirage fighters, but at this stage Venezuela would not send troops to the Falklands, he said. Gen. Leal also confirmed the president's comments that Venezuela has suspended negotiations over the acquisition of 24 jet fighters from British Aerospace in a deal which would have been worth $ 250 million.

In Costa Rica, it was reported that the government had suggested that the headquarters of the OAS should be moved from Washington to Latin America to avoid a total breakdown of the organization ; in the meantime, the President of Costa Rica said that the

U.S. support for Britain represented a severe blow to the inter-American system which is putting in danger the very future of the OAS.

As for Cuba, it was reported in an interview with the French news paper Le Monde that, Cuba's vice-president Mr. Carlos Rafael Rodrigues who was on an official visit to France, had declared that his country would support Argentina with all the means at its disposal including military aid.

From Moscow ,President Brezhnev said that the British – Argentine conflict over the Falkland islands provided evidence of Washington's imperialist designs towards South America. At the same time, the Soviet newspaper Pravda laid the main blame for the aggravation of the Falklands crisis on the U.S. which it said was putting political and diplomatic pressure on Argentina and providing military support to the

British fleet which led to the sinking of the Belgrano. The newspaper added, "it is clear that the British Conservatives had acted in such a challenging manner only because they were backed by the senior partner in NATO". Tass also said that the British and American actions against Argentina showed the mendacity and hypocrisy of assertions that NATO's naval military build-up was necessary only to neutralize the Soviet threat. In fact, there had been considerable speculation in Washington that the Soviet Union might side with Buenos Aires if for example, the Argentine junta offered the Soviet Union a lease for naval facilities in one of its ports. Indeed, it was quite possible that Gen. Galtieri might use the threat of Soviet involvement to deter the U.S. administration from maintaining its support for

Britain, and might reinforce pressure on Britain to compromise.

On May 4th 1982 , the UN secretary-General Mr. De Cuellar announced that he had proposed certain ideas to Argentina and Britain for resolving the dispute and he asked the two nations to respond in 24 hours (by May 5th). Mr. de Cuellar offered the ideas, which he declined to detail, in separate meeting on May 2nd, with Argentine's UN delegate Mr. Eduardo Roca, and British Foreign Secretary Mr. Francis Pym. Mr. De Cuellar added, the suspension of the peace initiative by Mr. Haig had created a diplomatic vacuum which only the UN could fill. He went on to say, Argentina had already accepted the idea of a UN role in a settlement and it is up to the British government to respond. But the British Foreign Minister Mr. Pym gave the distinct impression that he was not

enthusiastic about UN intervention. In fact, the U.S. peace initiative was dead after Washington's decision to side with Britain, but at the same time, the U.S. administration was concerned about the fighting around the Falklands for some reasons such as: It was widely accepted that Washington's attempts to establish closer ties within the hemisphere and to set up a solid anti-communist front have been gravely damaged; there appeared to be growing fears among the Americans that the Soviet Union could become involved in the dispute which would then turn into a big East-West conflict, and there was concern that the U.S. could be drawn into direct military involvement in support of Britain.

On the military front, the Argentines had their revenge by firing an Exocet missile from a Super Etendard naval fighter-bomber which Skimmed

across 20 miles of water to hit the 4,100 – ton destroyer HMS Sheffield. The missile struck the control room, starting a fire that could not be put out (most of the crew of 270 were lifted off but at least 30 men were killed). It was, the first serious losses for the British forces in the South Atlantic. Twenty four hours later, Mr. Nott (the British Defence Secretary) arrived in Brussels to press Britain's NATO allies to give the British government firm political backing over the Falklands, and to secure increased U.S logistical support for British forces operating in the South Atlantic, also to discuss with the U.S. Defence Secretary Mr. Caspar W. Weinberger a possible British request for further material support.

In London , (on the day after Britain suffered its first combat casualties of the Falklands crisis), there were growing signs of disagreement within the cabinet after

a two-hour meeting of the inner group of ministers in charge of the crisis, followed by a sudden emergency meeting of the full cabinet at Downing street. A few hours later, it was reported that the new emphasis on diplomacy was reflected in the Commons when Mr. Pym made it plain that he was now pinning his faith on the return of U.S. Secretary of State Haig as a channel of communication as well as a source of diplomatic initiative. In the meantime, the perceived word from Downing Street was that any negotiations would have to be about withdrawal of Argentine forces rather than about the conglomeration of other issues likely to follow a joint withdrawal by Britain and Argentina. Mr. Pym said that the British government had an open mind about a long-term solution of the Falkland problem, and he raised the possibility for the first time in Parliament of making

the islands a UN trusteeship when he said: a UN trusteeship is one of the possibilities and it might very well prove a highly suitable one.

At the UN, Mr. Eduardo Roca (the Argentine Ambassador) addressed the coordinating committee of nonaligned countries in an effort to elicit support for a new Security Council debate on the Falklands crisis.

From Washington, the white house issued a statement saying that President Reagan had directed the Secretary of State to stay actively engaged in an effort to do all he could to assist in a peaceful outcome of crisis. In fact, the U.S. was pressing on with diplomatic efforts based on the initiative by President Terry of Peru,(details of the Peruvian proposals were kept secret), but on May 6th, Argentina rejected the U.S./ Peruvian proposals. In fact, the latest peace

initiative was clearly the work of the U.S. Secretary of State Mr. Haig rather than of the Peruvian government. It included specific proposals for a phased withdrawal of Argentine troops from the Islands timed to coincide with a cease- fire. At any rate, the initiative was unacceptable to the Argentines who evidently told the Peruvian President that they found it unacceptable, and the Peruvians therefore decided not to put the plan to either side in a formal manner.

The Argentine rejection of the U.S./ Peruvian proposals stunned the British government. Indeed, Whitehall feared that the junta rejected the plan because they might secure a cease-fire from the UN. without first having to agree to a withdrawal of their troops from the islands.

Anyhow,the collapse of the Peruvian proposals never regarded in London as much more than a vehicle for a revival of the Haig mediation.

Back to military front, it was clear that the Argentine Defence Minister Amadeo Frugoli and the British Defence Secretary John Nott were still very far apart. Mr. Nott ruled out a cease-fire without simultaneous withdrawal of Argentine troops from the Falklands, especially when he said: "To agree to a ceasefire without withdrawal would be to leave the burglar with his spoils, he added: "there can be no turning back from the military objectives which we have set ourselves in the necessary defence of our own forces from continuing Argentine attacks". But at the same time, the Argentine Defence Minister Mr. Frugoli said :Argentina has clearly stated that its sovereignty over the Malvinas should be recognized as such, and it is

open to any diplomatic negotiations as long as they do not affect its honour and legitimate rights.

As for the UN plan which was put by Mr. De Cuellar and called for: an immediate cease-fire; withdrawal of Argentine troops; withdrawal of the British fleet enforcing a 200-mile blockade of the Falklands; A beginning of negotiations; Suspension of economic sanctions against Argentina; and UN Administration of the islands during peace talks .Argentina, in replying to Mr. de Cuellar said: it accepted the intent of the proposals and was ready to discuss its details. In the meantime, Mrs. Thatcher said: the government welcomed the ideas put forward by the UN Secretary-General and could accept them as a framework on which more specific proposals can be built, but she stressed that for the peace proposals to be acceptable

they would have to be precise about the timing, sequence, and verification of events.

Just twenty four hours later, it was reported that Britain had increased the pressure by extending its total exclusion zone around the Falkland islands to up to 12 nautical miles from the Argentine coastline. In the meantime, the British government warned that any Argentine warship or military aircraft found within the zone would be regarded as hostile.

The British move followed a warning from the Foreign Minister Mr. Pym (24 hours earlier) that "British warplanes will again bomb the airstrip at the islands capital, Stanley, if Argentine troops repair the damage of two recent raids ."

As for the Exclusion zone: Britain had warned Uruguay, Brazil, and the world's large maritime powers that the Falklands exclusion zone applies

within the estuary of the River Plate for a distance of 190 miles from the open sea at Punta Norte. In fact, the exclusion zone affected Montevideo's trade with Buenos Aires, it also damaged the interests of Paraguay and even Bolivia (much of whose trade is river borne). At that point the estuary was just over 60 miles wide, but the route to Buenos Aires goes diagonally westward making it an eight-hour journey of about 120 miles for the average freighter, even if ships were to hug the Uruguayan shore, there must come a point when they would have to turn and make a dash across 25 miles of open water. The warning said :"the Navy will enforce the 12- mile exclusion zone, covering civil as well as military shipping, along the whole length of the Argentine coast ; so, the estuary's formation meant that the zone effectively cuts the traffic across the estuary which is vital to the

commercial life of Buenos Aires. At all events. "Lioyds" which has withdrawn insurance from Argentine vessels, had imposed a war surcharge on all shipping in the area; and this came as a nasty shock to Brazil which had found its exports to Chile, Peru and Ecuador sent round Cape Horn in hot competition with Japan carrying insurance rates ten times higher than before. But the country which felt the ban most was Uruguay which normally shares a considerable cargo and passenger traffic with Argentine across the River Plate.

Back to UN, the Argentine ambassador to the UN Mr. Eduardo Roca said: "the extension of the zone is a further act of aggression which comes while the Secretary-General was trying to facilitate a peaceful settlement". He added: Argentina therefore holds Britain responsible for the consequences of this

measure, and Argentina reserves the rights to adopt whatever defensive measures it feels are necessary in accordance with Article 51 of the UN charter.

In fact, before the British Defence Ministry announced the exclusion zone, the Argentine Foreign Minister Dr. Costa Mendez said: There are sure hopes that progress can be achieved in understanding with Britain . Dr. Costa Mendez, however, described the Secretary-General's intervention as the only positive point so far in diplomatic efforts to halt the fighting. Dr. Costa Mendez went on to say that: he believed the U.S. decision to support Britain was a mistake and that the U.S .had made a bad analysis of the currant situation , and above all, a bad analysis of the future; and he predicted that the U.S. position regarding the conflict would provoke a deterioration in U.S. foreign

policy, not only in Latin America but in the rest of the world .

From Buenos Aires, it was reported that the Argentine deputy foreign minister Mr. Enriquo Ros flew to New York to seek clarification of the peace plan from Mr. de Cuellar. In fact, Mr. de Cuellar hoped that he might be able to get around the impasse with some kind of face-saving formula in which both sides would agree to a phased withdrawal of their forces after the unconditional cease-fire.

In London, Mrs. Thatcher and her inner cabinet saw the UN talks as the final phase of the diplomatic battle before an armed invasion became inevitable; at the same time, Mr. Pym was attempting to mobilise world opinion on Britain's side by blaming Argentina for the failure to reach a peaceful settlement. Moreover, it was believed that, the British forces would be ordered

within 48 hours to put a secret strategy into effect to retake the Falklands by force if the final UN efforts fail to achieve a speedy ceasefire, and in private Mr. Haig said: "the British will do whatever it takes to recapture the islands if the Argentines do not withdraw".

Forty eight hours later (May 9^{th}), Britain's naval task force attacked Argentine positions near Stanley airport on the Falkland islands. Here, the Defence Ministry announced that: the British task force attacked military targets in the vicinity of Port Stanley airfield which had been hit on May 2^{nd} and 4^{th} by both Vulcan long-range bombers and Sea Harrier fighters; the British task force also had captured an Argentine fishing vessel that the Ministry said had been spying on the British fleet near the Falklands.

As a result, Argentina sent a letter to the UN Security Council strongly protesting at the latest British strike on the Falklands and charging that London was jeopardizing the UN peace negotiations, Argentina also accused Britain of sinking an unarmed trawler and strafing survivors in lifeboats in an incident in the South Atlantic.

Mr. de Cuellar (the UN Secretary General) avoided any direct criticism of the British action, and he told reporters that: if both sides are interested in a peaceful solution, they will start by acting peacefully, and he hoped that all peace-loving countries are really interested in this UN exercise because it is the only one running.

From New York, the Argentine Foreign Minister Dr. Costa Mendez in an American television interview said that: "We are not putting sovereignty as a

precondition for our talks, but any negotiations "he said" must eventually lead to recognition of Argentine sovereignty over the Falklands". Dr. Costa Mendez went on to say that Argentina had always been ready to compromise and negotiate but that the key to opening talks was British good will and understanding. He added: Argentina was ready to withdraw its troops from the Falkland islands if the British withdraw its fleet under the authority of the UN, and we are ready to negotiate the way the islands should be administrated during the period, and we want to settle the fundamentals for the acceptance of Argentine sovereignty.

In fact, the Argentine government was willing to take some steps to meet British concern about the status of the 1,800 islanders; it was ready to discuss their situation and prepared to grant them every right they

wanted such as religion, language, and the right to property.

On May 10th, the British warships once more bombarded Argentine military targets around Port Stanley as the Falklands peace talks continued in New York. But Argentina strongly protested to the UN at the latest British strike and had accused Britain of using anti-personnel scatter bombs in Harrier attacks on the Falklands by saying that the anti-personnel scatter bombs are banned under the 1949 Geneva Convention (it was reported on May 9th, fragments of a bomb including its casing marked" "Cluster" and the number "RDXTUT/1" were shown to a small group of foreign and Argentine journalists, and a notice described the exhibits as a Beluga bomb dropped by British aircraft on the Malvinas islands on May 1st 1982).

At the UN, Britain and Argentina had a third day of separate talks with the UN Secretary-General on technical aspects of a case-fire, a mutual withdrawal of forces and the make-up of an interim UN administration for the Falklands. But British officials at the UN said that there was no breakthrough in the peace talks had occurred and none seemed imminent. In fact, the British were arguing in the light of contradictory statements from Buenos Aires on May 9th and 10th, on the crucial point of whether the junta had dropped its insistence on British recognition of Argentine sovereignty over the Falklands as a pre-condition for withdrawing its occupation troops. But the fact of the matter was that the British press had tried to suggest that the Argentine Foreign Minister Dr. Costa Mendez said in his interview on the U.S. TV. had confused the whole diplomatic process, but

Dr. Costa Mendez made it clear that Argentine's aim in the negotiations would be to secure acceptance of Argentine sovereignty over the islands especially when he said :Argentina was not insisting that Britain accepted Argentine sovereignty before the talks began. In other words, he was abiding strictly by the meaning of the words "without pre-conditions".

On the international level, the French Foreign Minister Mr. Claude Cheysson said that, he could not imagine the circumstances in which France would not support Britain over the Falklands crisis. He added: the British were defending international law, and we support them.

In Dublin (Ireland), the crisis over the islands was having a chilling effect on the tortured relationship between Britain and Ireland. However, the new troubles between these two neighboring islands grew

out of Ireland's often overlooked neutrality in international affairs, and the instinctive Irish antipathy to British expansionism . After the sinking of the Argentine cruiser Gen. Belgrano, this ambivalence led the Dublin government close to a unilateral renunciation of the economic sanctions that Ireland, Britain, and the other eight EEC had voted against Argentina on April 17th.

The Irish government said that the community sanctions were imposed in order to prevent conflict, not to be allied with it; therefore the Irish premier Mr. Haughey said, the sanctions were no longer appropriate, and he began lobbying within the EEC to have them suspended or at least not renewed when it expired on May 17th.

Indeed, the escalation of the conflict in the South Atlantic into what the Irish government called open

war between Britain and Argentina had brought into play Ireland's tradition of neutrality despite its close links with such western nations as Britain and the U.S., Ireland was neutral in world War ll, and it is the only member of the EEC that does not belong to the North Atlantic "NATO".

Back to London, there was no official encouragement in Whitehall for any new optimism about an early settlement at the UN, and there was less emphasis on diplomacy at war Cabinet meeting, and the discussion was said to be 50% on diplomacy and 50% on military matters. But twenty four hours later (May 11th), it was reported that the British forces had sunk an Argentine ship (believed to be an oil tanker) in the narrow waterway that separates East and West Falkland islands. It was also reported that the British has asked the U.S to lend the Royal Air Force a long-

range KC-135 aerial tanker to refuel British bombers and reconnaissance planes such as AWACS (Airborne Warning And Control System). Meanwhile, Mrs. Thatcher said peace talks in the Falklands crisis at the UN will not close off possible military options, and there are certain fundamental principles we cannot fudge, she said, and a cease-fire must be accompanied by Argentine withdrawal to a specific timetable and the Argentines must give up the idea that at the end, sovereignty will be conceded to them. Mrs. Thatcher also, refused demands by the opposition labour party leader Mr. Foot to let parliament pass judgement on any UN peace plan before her government accepted or rejected it, and she told Mr. Foot that the government alone would decide and would stand before Parliament to defend its decision. However, Britain's relations with her EEC partners were threatened with

their worst crisis since Britain joined the EEC after an effort to force through higher Common Market farm prices against a British veto. Britain's nine partners in the EEC gave Britain a week to agree on the 1982 – 83 farm price increases or plunge the EEC into its most serious crisis since 1965. Britain had said that it might stop budgetary payments if the EEC tries to override its veto, also it had been blocking the farm agreement for what it believed was its excessive contribution to the budget; however, the chairman of the Farm Ministers Council Mr. Paul de Keersmaeker of Belgium said :this is the last postponement and a decision will be made on May 17th 1982 whatever the state of other problems (he was referring to the budget problem that Britain linked to the farm prices); here, the British Minister Mr. Peter walker blamed the European Commission for rushing a

decision on May 17th, and he called the procedure used by the commission "totally unacceptable, a funny, stupid little device, ...an act of hostility to my country". In fact, Britain's partners explicitly said they hoped for a unanimous decision on May 17th, pressing London to change its mind, but they did not exclude the possibility that Britain would use the unwritten right of veto that De Gaulle asserted in 1965 (in actual fact, the EEC agreement reached at that time said no country could have a decision imposed on it contrary to its vital interests). So, the Commission Vice President Mr. Etienne Davignon told Mr. Walker that the right of veto had never been used to block policies written into the Common Market Treaty; at the same time, the French Minister Mrs. Edith Cresson said that the nine countries agreed that farmers can't wait anymore. Furthermore, no vital

British interests are at stake in the decision on farm prices, she said. Moreover, the German Minister Mr. Joseph Ertl said there can't be a one way solidarity, and there are not only the vital interests of one country, but of nine others, he also said that he was ready to face Britain in a vote. Indeed, the rising friction between the EEC partners was worsened by the Falklands conflict.

As for Latin American countries, Britain was suspected by most of them of them of not really wanting negotiations with Argentina to succeed until it had some kind of military victory in the Falklands conflict; they also accused Britain of direct responsibility for the collapse of the Peruvian mediation effort by sinking the Argentine crusier General Belgrano; moreover, they expressed a hardening conviction that Britain was deliberately

taking military action every time a mediation plan shows promise of success, and that was not only of the sinking of the Gen. Belgrano but also the extension of the exclusion zone to within 12 miles of the Argentine coast, the repeated bombing of Port Stanley airfield and the sinking of an Argentine fishing vessel.

(3)

The Peruvian initiative and UN intervention

Now let us have a look how the Peruvian initiative collapsed?. On May 1st, Mr. Arias Stella (the Peruvian Foreign Minister) contacted the U.S. ambassador Mr. Frank Rortiz in Lima and asked him to transmit a four-point mediation proposal to the U.S. State Department , and these points which as follows: (1) A period of truce; (2) Mutual withdrawal of armed forces; (3) An immediate opening of negotiations between Britain and Argentina with reference to past UN General Assembly Resolution on the Falklands (which urged progress towards decolonization of the islands while respecting the islanders interests) and to the recent OAS meeting which recognized Argentina's rights to sovereignty; (4) Temporary administration of

the island by the UN with the support of an international peace keeping force. But later on president Belaunde of Peru and Mr. Haig worked out a modified seven-point plan as follows: (1) Immediate cessation of hostilities; (2) Mutual withdrawal of armed forces; (3) The installation of representatives from countries other than the parties involved in the conflict to govern the islands temporarily; (4) The British and Argentine governments would recognise the existence of differing and conflicting claims over the Falkland islands; (5) The two governments would recognize that the viewpoint and interests of the islanders must be taken into account in seeking a peaceful solution to the problem; (6) The contact group which would immediately intervene in the negotiations to put this agreement into effect would consist of Brazil, Peru, West Germany and the U.S.;

(7) Before April 30th 1983 a definite agreement would have been reached under the responsibility of the above four countries.

So, the Peruvians assumed that the proposals constituted an acceptable basis of negotiation to Britain, but the Argentines called Lima back with a number of proposed modifications, particularly to points 5 and 6. In fact, Gen. Galtieri(President of Argentina) did not like the inclusion of the U.S. in the four supervisory countries, also did not wish the viewpoint of the islanders to be taken into account, only their interests. However, after some negotiations between Lima, Washington and Argentina, the three amended points were agreed as follows: (4)The two governments recognize the existence of differing and conflicting claims over the Falkland islands, and will take account of the resolutions on the islands

approved by various international bodies; (5) The two governments recognize that the aspirations and interests of the local inhabitants must be taken into account in the definitive solution to the problem; (6)The contact group which would intervene immediately in the negotiations to implement this agreement would be composed of various countries to be designated by common agreement.

Finally, President Belaude of Peru went on Television with a message of hope that the mediation looked like being successful, but shortly afterwards he received a telephone call from Gen. Galtieri who said that as the Argentine junta was putting the final touches to a decision approving the proposals it had received news of the sinking of the Gen. Belgrano which led to the collapse of U.S. Peruvian proposals.

On May 14th, Gen. Galtieri made a concession by dropping the issue of Argentina sovereignty as a precondition for talks to end the crisis over the South Atlantic Islands. He said: "We can talk to achieve this objective, and we can talk in a reasonable period of time as long as it is not for another 149 years to achieve this sovereignty". In the meantime, UN sources said that the British And Argentine positions on the UN peace plan were very close, closer than they have ever been, but that it was still too early to forecast the outcome. But the real question, according to UN officials was whether Mrs. Thatcher was willing to defy the hard-liners on her right and declare peace. In fact, the main problems were as follows: The British were still wanting firm assurances that if and when they begin direct negotiations with Argentina on the issue of sovereignty over the islands the outcome

would not have been prejudged in Argentina's favour (in actual fact, UN officials said that Argentina had already conceded that point); There had been, also, no decision about what would happen if the Anglo-Argentine negotiations over sovereignty became deadlocked, here, the UN peace plan put a time limit (perhaps six months to one year on the negotiations) but the British wanted it to provide for an extension, in the meantime, the Argentines wanted some formula to ensure that London could not prolong the talks indefinitely. Finally, the British insisted that any final agreement on the future of the islands must take some account of the views of the islanders, but the Argentines insisted on their interests not their views. But there were also number of minor points remaining to be clarified such as, the withdrawal of their forces after a ceasefire. Here, Britain wanted to

keep its fleet near enough to the islands to forestall any future Argentine invasion.

The British had serious reservations about UN intervention, and the basic reason for Britain's lack of enthusiasm about the UN was that the majority in the General Assembly and the Security Council was heavily stacked against it . Indeed, for many years that majority has tacitly supported Argentina's claim to the Falklands. In the meantime, the non-aligned countries demanded that Britain should end its illegal occupation and supported Argentina's claim to the islands. So, Britain was extremely reluctant to allow the General Assembly to take up the Falklands dispute, also turning the islands over to the UN Trusteeship Council could be equally damaging to the British interests because the General Assembly normally supervises trusteeships. However, the only

way out for Britain was to declare that the Falklands is a strategic area in which case the Security Council where Britain has a veto would supervise.

Moreover, the British were concerned about Mr. de Cuellar, and they believed that at some stage he might be restricted and UN pressures could influence the outcome against them .But .Mr. de Cuellar in fact, wanted the UN to play a major role in the island's future .

In London, Mrs. Thatcher told the House of Commons that she sought a peaceful solution not a peaceful sellout in the Falkland islands crisis, in the meantime, the Foreign Secretary Mr. Pym warned members of the House that military incidents may occur with increasing frequency as the net closes around the islands. The remarks, however, reflected both renewed British pessimism toward negotiations

at the UN, and pressure from right-wing Conservatives who had became increasingly upset at signs that the Thatcher government was prepared to make substantial concessions to achieve a settlement, in part because the right-wing pressure had included demands for more military action.

On May 14th, Mrs. Thatcher warned that a negotiated settlement of the Falkland islands dispute may prove to be unobtainable, and she told the 100th annual conference of the Scottish Conservative Party in Perth that if peace talks at the UN broke down, we should have to turn to the only other course open to us (she was referring to an invasion of the islands).

At the UN, Sir Anthony Parsons (the British ambassador at UN) held more talks on the crisis with Mr. de Cuellar, but it was learned later that he made it clear to the secretary-general there could be no

agreement unless the Argentines made further substantial concessions. But Mr. de Cuellar imposed a dead line on the talks. Here, he said that He hoped that Britain and Argentina would produce final answers to his peace plan in 24 hours, he added: I never had in mind endless negotiations, but in spite of this warning there was still some optimism at the UN, but this apparently was not shared in Washington or in London.

On May 16th, President Galtieri of Argentina said in an interview that a British invasion of the Falklands is imminent (with almost 400 Argentine lives lost), he added: honour is at stake and the country is willing to fight a bloody and prolonged war, and I'm carrying on my shoulders the spilled blood of 400 Argentines, and the Argentine people are ready for not only 400 but 4,000 or 40,000 people, and if Britain insists with

its militaristic attitudes, taking the conflict toward final consequences, we want Argentina and the world to know that just as we have been maintaining this situation in these past five or six weeks, we will continue to maintain five or six months or five or six years. But in the meantime, Gen. Galtieri emphasized on a negotiated solution. He also said: We will not break off the talks at the UN despite growing British military pressure, and in no way will Argentina be the one to cancel or cut this communication. He added: and it is probable that an approach toward the search for a solution my exist.

As for Dr. Costa Mendez (the Argentine Foreign Minster), he said that the return to London of Sir Anthony Parsons (the British representative at the UN) proved that the responsibility for the delay or the prolongation of the negotiations was due to the British

not the Argentines; but he also expressed hope that it might lead to an accord within the British government for a negotiated settlement.

From London, however, the British Defence Secretary Mr. Nott set the tone for a toughening of the line in a BBC radio interview, when asked if he ever envisaged future Argentine sovereignty over the islands: he declared "No, Never". He added, time is not on the side of negotiation, and I don't think they can go on dragging for much longer, and it will be necessary, he said, in my judgment within the course of the next week for the Argentines to come to a head one way or another.

As for Mrs. Thatcher, speaking at a dinner in Edinburgh (Scotland), she praised the immediate support which the French President had given to Britain over the Falklands crisis. Mrs. Thatcher also

stressed the need for military power, and reaffirmed her government's commitment to purchase Trident missiles.

Twenty four hours later, Mrs. Thatcher made it clear in a special radio interview that, the invaders would be ejected from the islands and markedly toughening her tone, she added: an aggressor who succeeded in his objective would have to be subjected to military action to ensure that he departed, and we shall know this week whether we are going to get a peaceful settlement or not. In fact, Mrs. Thatcher was highly pessimistic about the possibilities of a last-minute breakthrough at the UN, and she expected Mr. de Cuellar's peace initiative to collapse in 24 to 36 hours; in the meantime, the British government was doing its utmost to reinforce the belief that Britain's South Atlantic task force was making final preparations for

a major amphibious assault on the Falklands within the 72 hours.

At the UN, however, Mr. de Cuellar (the Secretary General) was more than ever convinced that time was not on the side of peace. At the same time, a UN source said that many officials feared that the British invasion of the Falklands is imminent; either the British were dragging out the peace negotiations to cover their invasion plan, or they were using the threat of an invasion to squeeze more concessions from Argentina at the bargaining table (but either way did not look good for the peace plan). The concessions Britain wanted centered mainly on the framework for interim UN administration; so, the British were reported to be insisting that the UN administration must continue until a long-term agreement is reached. They also wanted to make

certain that it will include countries friendly to British interests such as U.S., they were also pressing for the reinstatement of the islanders local council. But the Argentine diplomats said that Buenos Aires would allow the islanders a voice in the administration but they barred any revival of the local council; the other remaining issue involved the withdrawal of forces, here, Britain was exceedingly reluctant to redploy the British fleet until all Argentine forces have been brought back to the mainland.

On the international level, however, it was reported from Luxembourg that the foreign ministers of the 10-nation EEC failed in two hours of talks to agree on a formula to keep the total import ban in force after midnight of May 17th. In fact, the Italian Foreign Minister Mr. Emilio Colombo told other ministers that his government could not take part in renewing

the sanctions because of strong public opposition to them in Italy.

As for Ireland which is neutral and the only EEC country that does not belong to NATO had criticized the sanctions by saying that it might be construed to mean that the EEC supported British military actions against Argentina. At any rate, eight out of ten renewed trade sanctions against Argentina for just seven days, but Ireland and Italy refused to support sanctions and were free to resume their normal trade with Argentina from May 18th, but they undertook to do nothing to undermine the effect of sanctions by other EEC countries. Indeed, the agreement fell a long way short of Britain's demand for the unambiguous support of sanctions by all its EEC partners.

Twenty four hours later (May 18th), it was reported from Brussels that British policy in the EEC suffered

a historic setback when seven other member states (except Denmark, Greece and Britain) abandoned a 16-year-old tradition of approving major issues by unanimous voting and over-rode the UK's attempt to block a 10.5% rise in community farm prices for 1982 – 83. As a result, the British Agriculture Minister Mr. Peter Walker announced; They have changed the rules of the game, and I regard this as a very sad and damaging day in the EEC's history; and in a bitter attack on the French, west German, and Italian farm ministers (Mrs. Edith Cresson, Mr. Josef Ert1, and Giuseppe Bertolemei) Mr. Walker said it was an impetuous decision, cynical, stupid, incoherent and ridiculous which on reflection the majority of ministers would come to regret. Therefore,the Italian and French ministers insisted on having this view

recorded in the Council minutes in a move condemned by the British Minister Mr. Peter Walker. In fact, Mrs. Cresson of France and Mr. Giuseppe Bartolomei of Italy denied that the community's 16-years-old tradition of decisions on the basis of unanimity had been destroyed (this prompted Mr. Walker to describe their attitude as cynical, stupid, incoherent and ridiculous). So, in a statement to the farm ministers, Mrs. Cresson said that France still adhered to the principle that every member state could block decisions that affected vital national interests, but it was never the object to allow countries to paralyze the institutions of the community, she said. But Mr. Walker, however, rejected her claims which were supported by the European commission that the council had an obligation under the Treaty of Rome to adopt the farm package. The package voted on May

18th, included the following percentage increases in guaranteed prices paid to farmers for major products: milk 10.5, wine 11, butter 10, olive oil 11, beef 11, cotton 13, pork and lamb 10.5, cheese 11.3 to 12, cereals 8.5, rice 12, fruit and vegetables 8 to 11, and sugar 9.5. In a statement issued after the decision of the seven member states to override Britain's attempt to block the 1982 ٨٣– increase in farm prices, President Mitterrand of France said: "The problem arising now as a result of the Brussels decision is not that of majority voting or unanimity in the Council of Ministers, but that of the role Britain intends to play and in the last resort depending on what reply Britain may make to that basic question that of her presence or the nature of that presence in the community. President Mitterrand's strong words (issued from Algeria at the start of a tour of Africa) were backed

by Mr. Pierre Mauroy (the French Prime minister) who said: The British Prime Minister has found the French President as inflexible as herself over farm prices. He added, France has had occasion to show solidarity with Britain in its difference with Argentina, but we cannot accept that the 1966 Luxembourg compromise should be prevented from its purpose; and it can never be used to dismantle the Common Market which Britain joined while accepting its rules.

From London, Mrs. Thatcher said :the vote was without precedent and would raise serious issue ; she added: and I don't think. She also said, it would be wise to go any further than that at the moment, and it might still be possible to pull it back. In fact, the British government and Whitehall were trying to limit the damage which ministers feared could come from

any over robust reaction to the double rebuff Britain received in the last few days (the limited and partial extension of the EEC trade sanctions against Argentina and the overriding of British views on EEC farm prices). Moreover, the British Ministers seemed to be concerned that over-reaction might alienate Britain's partners when she urgently needed their understanding over the British budgetary problem and their support over the Falklands crisis.

From New York, Mr. de Cuellar had suspended his talks with the two sides at the UN headquarter for a day to allow the Argentines to work out their answers to the British views he received earlier which were the final British position on the question (in fact, Mr. de Cuellar had not asked for 24-hour suspension . He said: it is what I thought the Argentines might need, and if they are ready before that, I'm sure they will

come back before). In the meantime an Argentine diplomat said that his country's negotiators at the UN were working to try to narrow the differences in the way o fan agreement, and new Argentine proposals would be presented to the Secretary General as soon as possible, he said.

The British government was clearly trying to put forward the view that conflict is inevitable and that Argentine is to blame; moreover, word in Whitehall was that Argentina had missed the boat in negotiations. Indeed, Britain was trying to ensure that international support for its case was maintained by arguing that Argentina itself wrote off the talks.

In Buenos Aires, however, a sense of disappointment was felt in diplomatic circles that Mrs. Thatcher remained unmoved by the latest proposals offered by Argentina, and at the Argentine Foreign Ministry

officials accused Britain of holding to an inflexible position. Dr. Gustavo Figueroa (Chief of the Minister's Cabinet at the Foreign Ministry) said that the door is still open if Britain wants to negotiate, but if London does not want talks they will attack. He added, ours was a good and wide plan, it was a big package so we still could get a satisfactory reply. The Argentine plan was said to contain three main points as follows: (1) Immediate withdrawal by both sides; (2) Interim UN administration; (3) Overseers and flag from Argentina and Britain.

The Argentines, argued that it had no objection to taking its troops off the islands as long as it was assured that the British task force had turned back, but Argentine's final response to Britain's proposals was described in London as not satisfactory. Earlier Sir Anthony Parsons (Britain's chief delegate at the

UN) was instructed to tell Mr. de Cuellar that Britain wanted a quick reply stating Argentina's final position and the British government was not prepared to tolerate further playing for time by the Junta. But in the meantime. Mr. de Cuellar announced that his peace mission had not ended. He added , he would make proposals of his own aimed to break the deadlock. Anyhow, it was clear that the UN had done as much as it could. In fact, the Security Council could attempt to impose a ceasefire but the British would be likely to veto it. It also believed that Washington had deliberately inhibited Mr. de Cuellar's effort by assuring Britain of its full support whatever the British position at the bargaining table.

Twenty four hours later (May 20th), Mrs. Thatcher gave the task force commander Admiral Woodward the order to launch a series of landings and raids on

the Falkland islands. She told the House of commons that, the gravity of the situation will be apparent to the House and nation, and difficult days lie ahead, but Britain will face them in the conviction that our cause is just and in the knowledge that we have done everything reasonable to secure a negotiated settlement. She added, these proposals of ours are no longer on the table, they are withdrawn, they have been rejected by the Argentines even if they were acceptable to Argentina, it would take days and weeks to negotiate them, and we have been through all this before. She went on ,Argentina has rejected our proposals and it is inconceivable to accept those of the Secretary General which closely resemble ours. But Mr. Foot (the Leader of the opposition Labour Party) said :he did not believe that the Argentine proposals amounted to a total rejection of the British position.

He added that many people were entitled to make an assessment and the UN Secretary–General should be among those deciding whether there was peace or war. Mr. Foot said, Mrs.Thatcher and the Foreign Secretary Mr. Pym should go to New York for talks with Mr. de Cuellar. He added, what she needs to do is to gain support in the UN to sustain the Secretary General in the propositions he had put to the British government. But later on, it appeared that a big split in Labour's ranks emerged as Mr. Tony Benn and other labour left wingers forced; a vote on a procedural motion at the end of the debate to show their opposition to the escalation of military action and to continue negotiations in response to the latest appeal by the UN Secretary General (in fact, this was in defiance of the official labour line to abstain and maintain cross party support) The rebels, attracted 33

votes against 296. At the UN, however, it was clear that the difference still remained between the two parties which were as follows:

1- The islands covered by the agreement: Here, Britain insisted the agreement should apply only to East and West Falkland islands, but Argentina demanded it must cover South Georgia and the South Sandwich islands.

2- As for the timing and extent of military withdrawal: Britain demanded all forces removed within 15 days to at least 150 miles from the islands, but Argentina wanted 30 days for forces to return to their normal bases and areas of operation.

3- Argentina wanted free access for her nationals to the islands, but Britain feared that it could lead to the swamping of the 1,800

inhabitants before they are consulted about their future.

4- **As regards the powers of the UN administrator: Britain insisted that the administrator must work in consultation with the traditional legislative and executive councils of the Falkland islands. Here, Britain said it would accept only one representative of the Argentine population in the islands to be added to each council. But Argentina wanted the administrator to have exclusive responsibility over the islands, it also wanted the flags of Argentina and Britain to be flown together with that of the UN.**

5- **Argentina suggests the negotiations on the future of the Islands should be initiated without prejudice to the rights and claims and**

positions of both parties, but in meantime, it would not accept Britain's demand that a phrase should be added stating that the outcome of the negotiations would not be prejudged.

Earlier, however, there had been a dispute over whether the wishes of the islanders should be paramount as the British had long insisted, now the British said that the interests of the inhabitants of non-self-governing territories should be paramount. So, while Britain was on the brink of wiping out the diplomatic solution, and taking up the military means of getting the Argentines off the islands, Mr. de Cuellar (the UN Secretary – General) intervened with new proposals which were delivered to the British government in London. In fact, Mrs. Thatcher conveyed some sense of her personal annoyance at the

Secretary-General's surprise move when she opened the sixth Commons debate on the Falkland crisis (May 20th 1982). It only emerged later that she and her colleagues had been taken entirely by surprise at 6 am. May 20th, when Mr. de Cuellar's latest set of proposals were delivered in London, she made it clear in the Commons that she saw little hope of a successful outcome to the latest Falklands peace proposals put forward by Mr. de Cuellar. The text of the UN Aide Memoire (as it was called) was confidential, but it was known that Mr. de Cuellar took it as agreed that Argentina accepted long term negotiations without pre-judgment of the outcome.

However ,as the new message from the UN Secretary – General assumed that this Argentine concession was still available, Mrs. Thatcher and Mr. Pym found it hard to believe that the basis for a deal would be

found. Moreover, the other stumbling block in the UN Aid Memoire was the inclusion in any agreement of the remote islands of South Georgia and the Sandwich are 800 and 1,200 miles respectively south east of Port Stanley and around 7,000 miles from London. Here, the Argentine government insisted that the two sets of islands must be included in the package deal, but the British government had nothing to do with it, particularly because South Georgia had been cleared of Argentine troops.

Chapter seven
British landing on the Falkland islands

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British landing on the Falkland Islands

On May 21st 1982, British forces landed on the Falkland islands and established a firm bridgehead. The landings came barely 12 hours after negotiations between Britain and Argentina collapsed with Mrs. Teacher accusing Argentina of obduracy, intransigence and bad faith. A few hours later, the White House issued a strong reaffirmation of its commitment to give Britain material aid in the fighting in South Atlantic. (In a special statement, the White House said: As the President and Secretary Haig have said, we will meet our commitment to Great Britain, and any response made to requests for assistance will be carefully evaluated on a case-by-case

basis ;We will, however, not address reports of specific requests for assistance or how we respond) .

At the UN, Argentina's supporters on the UN Security Council overrode strong opposition from Britain, U.S., and France and forced an open formal meeting of the Council on the Falklands crisis. The move came as the UN Secretary-General Mr. de Cuellar suggested to the Security Council that Britain and Argentina were equally to blame for the breakdown of the UN Peace negotiations. Mr. de Cuellar later said: "I think we will keep trying, perhaps in a different way, perhaps others can take action such as, the Security Council or another country or a group of countries". In the meantime, the Council decided at a 90-minute closed-door session to convene a public session over U.S. objections(in fact, the prime moves for the Security Council meeting

were Panama and the Soviet Union who insisted that the time had come for a public debate so that members could express their views). Moreover, the Irish Republic which had previously asked for an open meeting said, it wanted the Secretary-General to make a public report of his peace mission, because we need to know how far apart the parties were and why they could not reach an agreement, (here, the Secretary-General was still trying to maintain a strict neutrality because he believed that the conflict might eventually com back to the UN and he wanted to preserve his credibility as a mediator).

Despite the breakdown of Mr. de Cuellar's peace initiative, Argentina was insisting that it wants a negotiated settlement to the Falklands crisis, (in fact, Argentina was expected to make the maximum possible use of the UN to push its case in the next few

days to seek a condemnation of British efforts to recapture the islands, and to seek support from the non-aligned movement, but it was clear that any condemnation of British military raids on the Falklands was certain to be vetoed by Britain and U.S and perhaps France) . It was also, clear that the British Foreign Secretary Mr. Pym instructed Britain's UN Ambassador Sir Anthony Parsons to veto any Security Council move to impose an unconditional ceasefire in the Falklands which led Sir Anthony to say : we are not going to accept a ceasefire which enables Argentina to consolidate what she had gained by force, and which leaves us with our hands tied; he added: it is totally inequitable.

As regards Latin American countries ,their reaction, however, to the British landing was becoming a serious matter, therefore, foreign ministers of many of

the republics held urgent talks in Caracas (Venezuela)to consider their joint course of action and it was believed that they might withdraw ambassadors from London and order the British ambassadors out of their capitals which might be followed by a full break in diplomatic relations (it was reported that countries like Peru, Bolivia, Nicaragua, Panama, Uruguay and Paraguay committed to this course in private messages to Buenos Aires).

From London, there was a powerful evidence of the British Government's commitment to a military escalation which came with the embarrassing news that the charred remains of a British Sea King helicopter had been found in Chile (and this seemed to be connected with the persistent claims from senior Argentina diplomats that seven British commandos

have been captured near the Argentine air base Rio Gallegos on the mainland).

On may 23rd, it was reported from London that Mrs. Thatcher's tough stand in the South Atlantic had enjoyed a remarkable range of political support at home, except for the far left wing of the opposition Labour Party who insisted that the Falklands were not worth the lives of British Marines. In the meantime, according to an opinion poll conducted on may 21ST, Mrs. Thatcher's supporters on her policy over the Falklands increased, and was promising a Conservative victory in a general election.

But at the UN, the Security Council met for the third successive day on the Falklands conflict, and ended a three-hour meeting with no sign of any Resolution. In fact, all speakers called for an end to the fighting , and most of them asked for a Council Mandate

empowering the Secretary-General Mr. de Cuellar to embark on a new peace-making effort.

In the meantime, Latin American countries including Honduras, Nicaragua, Columbia, EL-Salvador, Paraguay, Peru and Panama supported Argentine's claim to sovereignty over the islands. But at the same time, New Zealand, Belgium, and France in varying degrees accused Argentina of violating international law by seizing the islands.

During the Security Council debate, non-aligned and Communist delegates bitterly attacked Britain and demanded an unconditional ceasefire resolution, and behind the scenes several council members were working on the draft of a more constructive resolution that would seek to restore peace by calling on both sides to return to the negotiating table.

It was reported that, more than 30 delegates had spoken in the debate, but very few Westerners gave unequivocal support to Britain. The Africans and the communists coupled attacks on Britain with indignant protest against the EEC sanctions, added to this, the Soviet Union's ambassador Mr. Troyanovsky said that Britain's military escalation would never have occurred without the agreement and the support of the U.S.

But from Washington, Mr. Haig said that there was little chance of a new diplomatic initiative succeeding until the outcome of fighting in the Falklands became clear; he also emphasized that the U.S. would not support a call for an immediate ceasefire unless a truce agreement also ensured the withdrawal of Argentine forces from the islands.

Twenty four hours after Mr. Haig's statement from Washington ,the British Defence Secretary Mr. Nott announced that Britain would reject any call for a cease-fire or a temporary truce while British forces pressed ahead with plans to repossess the islands, and any question of talks about their long-term future must be left aside for the moment, and it is impossible to talk about changes in the sovereignty of the islands. Mr. Nott added: once Britain was back in control, there could be discussions not negotiations with Argentina and her neighours about the long-term future of the Falklands, and there could be a long-term guarantee, may be the U.S. in conjunction with South American countries, and talked about the possibility of independence for the islands. In fact Mr. Nott admitted that after repossession it might be impossible to return to the pre-invasion relationship

with Argentina and there probably would have to be a British garrison in the foreseeable future.

At the UN, the Security Council began the fourth day of its debate on the crisis; here, the Foreign Minster of Panama Mr. Jorge Illueca sought support from the non-aligned countries for a ceasefire call. The Panamanian draft which was supported by Argentina called on both sides to cease firing immediately and return to the peace table. There was also a Japanese resolution which called for the implementation of the Resolution 502 and requested the Secretary-General to renew the use of his good offices on the basis of his previous efforts with a view to achieving the earliest possible cessation of hostilities.

There was also, the Irish resolution which urged the parties to agree to a 72-hour truce and asked the Secretary-General to negotiate mutually acceptable

terms for a continuing ceasefire and to renew his peace effort. In fact, the Irish resolution to halt the Falklands conflict appeared to be doomed even before it was tabled in the UN Security Council. At any rate, the Irish delegation discussed its working paper with other members of the 15-nation council as they began a fourth day of debate on the crisis, but given the immediate British hostility, the prospects were not regarded as very hopeful(because Britain is a permanent member and could veto any resolution). In fact, the Council's problem was that, with a war going on, it felt it must take some action or lose all credibility, but Mr. de Cuellar had made it clear that he would not resume his peace efforts without a formal mandate from the Council. But the Council members pointed out that any mandate would be futile unless it was accompanied by a call for a

ceasefire which the British would veto. So, Argentina would like the Council to force a British veto, and in that event Argentine's friends on the Council could ask for an emergency session of the General Assembly where the majority supported Buenos Aires claims to the islands. So, while the Assembly has no real power, there would be a heated debate and the Latin Countries, the communists and many of the non-aligned would cast Britain in the roll of aggressor. Here, the Argentines were trying to change what was originally portrayed as an assertion of territorial claims into a Latin American struggle against the western power structure, at the same time, they revised their rightist foreign policy to embrace alliances with the non-aligned nations and liberal Latin American governments. The Argentines also said that, they are no longer simply fighting for

control of a small group of islands, but they are striking a blow against the international status quo since world war 11 that cedes control of the west to the U.S. and Western Europe, and by fighting back Argentina had come to embody the effort of developing nations especially in Latin America, to assert themselves politically and economically against the superpowers. Moreover, the Argentine battle would have a profound effect on the development of international relations and would considerably improve understanding between north and south. So, the shift by the U.S. from neutrality to open support for Britain had also helped the Argentine cause by increasing the perception in Argentina that the super powers were enforcing an unjust order; as a result, Argentina was finding increasingly strong diplomatic support among South American nations.

Brazil which originally was neutral on the conflict had strongly condemned Britain's latest attacks on the islands and had reportedly sold surveillance airplanes to Argentina; in addition, Venezuela had called British attempts to retake the islands an aggression against Latin America.

From Buenos Aires it was reported that Argentina was willing to accept Soviet military aid if it is needed to stave off defeat in the Falklands, the news came as a result of the renewal of economic sanctions against Argentina by most of the EEC countries. But the Argentine officials did not comment on what military aid might be offered or on the chances of its arrival in time to affect the present battle on the islands. Indeed, the Argentine move was principally directed at Washington whose support for Britain in the crisis was a cause of increasing concern in Buenos Aires.

From Johannesburg (South Africa):the Johannesburg Star newspaper reported that arms being supplied to Argentina included Sea-skimming Gabriel missiles and spare parts for Mirage fighter bombers(the Gabriel missiles "Israeli made" were reported to be as powerful as the Exocet missiles which sank HMS Sheffield). According to the star newspaper, the supplies were being loaded aboard a Uruguayan freighter in a remote corner of Cape Town's DF Malan airport; but the South African official spokesman refused to comment on the grounds that it was a South African principle not to disclose details of arms deals; but he added, South Africa had given Britain a guarantee that no Exocet missiles would be delivered because of the emotional reaction to the sinking of HMS Shefield; the official went on to say that the government would not boycott or embargo

any country as this would jeopardize faith in South Africa's ability to honour its contractual obligations. South Africa ,however, has the world's tenth biggest armaments industry , built up in response to the international arms embargo, and is anxious to develop export markets(details of these markets have been kept secret) . So, her diplomatic and political relationship with Argentina has been close to make it highly probable that Argentina has been a regular arms purchaser.

Back to Brussels, it was reported that six of Britain's nine EEG partners agreed to maintain indefinitely their ban on imports from Argentina. The show of support for Britain came during a meeting in Brussels of Community Foreign Ministers called to discuss the sanctions and Britain's payments to the EEG budget (1982-83). Italy and Ireland confirmed as expected

that they would no longer be applying the measures, meanwhile, Denmark said that she will operate the ban independently because of domestic opposition to maintaining it through Community rules. In fact, there was less satisfaction in store for Mr. Pym and more of a growing sense of crisis in negotiations to cut Britain's payments to the EEC budget.

From Buenos Aires, it was reported that the extension of the EEC sanctions against Argentina for an indefinite period cam as a demoralizing blow to official circles in Buenos Aires; as a result, the Argentine economy minister Dr. Roberto Alemann issued a brief statement saying that Argentina would continue to block imports from the EEC in retaliation.

On may 25th, Mrs. Thatcher made it clear in the House of Commons that Britain was not prepared to

accede to a ceasefire unless it was accompanied by the withdrawal of Argentine troops, and any UN Security Council move to call for a ceasefire would be vetoed. Mrs. Thatcher's comments underlined the government's view that a new phase in the dispute has started since the landing on the islands on may 22nd, with a renewed emphasis on the importance of the islanders wishes, and references to discussions not negotiations. Mrs. Thatcher also hinted that the government was considering investment in the islands. She also said : after restoring British administration there will be a good deal of reconstruction to be done and then the future will have to be discussed with the islanders. In the meantime, British senior ministers had been considering whether an attractive option might be to grant the islands independence backed by an

international guarantee as a longer-term solution which would answer any charges of colonialism and weaken Argentine's long-term position internationally.

At the UN, however, it appeared that members of the Security Council had reached agreement on an amended Irish resolution asking the Secretary-General to undertake new peace efforts. The UN sources said that Britain had no objections to the resolution which unlike the original version of the Irish text did not call for a 72-hour ceasefire. In fact, the amended text did not request Mr. de Cuellar to enter into immediate contact with Argentina and Britain to try to arrange terms for a ceasefire. But Argentina was reported to be willing to consider the Irish resolution which called for a 72-hour ceasefire while Mr. de Cuellar resumed talks for a settlement,

but the British had already threatened to veto the resolution, and in view of that threat, Ireland had informally indicated willingness to eliminate the ceasefire call from the resolution.

From Buenos Aires, the Argentine government accused Britain of trying to forge a military alliance in the South Atlantic. Here, Mr. Costa Mendez said that Argentina believes the British plan was to create a military alliance in the South Atlantic with bases in the Falklands, South Georgia and Sandwich Islands. He added: the only conclusion Argentina could draw is that it is designed to open the door for NATO in the South Atlantic. Mr. Costa Mendez went on to say that the U.S. supported Britain because it wanted to install a military base in the islands. Added to this, Dr. Amadeo Frugoli (the Argentina Defence minister) said: It is a thought we must consider because there is

no other explanation for supporting a colonialist power in this kind of venture far from its political and regional responsibilities. In fact, Argentina's displeasure had its first formal demonstration on may 22nd when Dr. Costa Mendez announced in New York that the Argentine government had recalled its military delegation from the inter- American Defence Board in Washington, also the Argentine officers at the U.S. military training school in the Panama Canal Zone (where two generations of Latin American officers have been trained in counter-terror methods) have been recalled. Here, Dr. Costa Mendez said: the action was taken in protest against U.S. support for Britain.

(2)

Mrs. Thatcher and no U-turn

On may 26th, Mrs. Thatcher told the Conservative Women's Conference in London that: in spite of grievous losses neither our resolve nor our confidence is weakened. She added: we know reality of war, we know its hazards and dangers, we know the formidable task that faces our fighting men, and we must expect fresh attacks upon them and there can be no question of pressing the force there is to move forward prematurely. Mrs. Thatcher went on to say : there is to be no U-turn in the British campaign to remove the Argentine troops by force and there are to be no more talks. In fact, her hard-line approach followed news of a South Atlantic operation in which the destroyer Coventry was sunk with 21 dead, and

the supply ship Atlantic Conveyor abandoned with eight dead.

Mr. Nott (the British) Defence Secretary) was reported to have urged MPs not to panic about recent bad news. However, he said, there was no alternative to the military approach which was gaining the upper hand. But in the meantime, there were Commons calls by a handful of right-wing MPs for a direct attack on military targets on the Argentine mainland. In fact, Mr. Nott did not rule out such action.

At the UN, the Security Council approved unanimously a compromise resolution giving Mr. de Cuellar(the Secretary General) a formal mandate to renew his efforts to find a peaceful solution to the Falklands crisis. This resolution was proposed by Guyana, Ireland, Jordan, Togo, Uganda, and Zaire whose delegates revised a text originally proposed by

Ireland. However, the resolution(505) stopped short of calling for an immediate ceasefire, but it opened the door to eventual peace negotiations, also asked the Secretary-General to start immediate negotiations with Britain and Argentina to ensure mutually acceptable terms for a ceasefire, and the sending of UN observers. Finally, Mr. de Cuellar was due to report back to the council. So,the Argentine delegate at UN Mr. Arnaldo Listre said his government would co-operate with the Secretary General and go into negotiation without precondition, but the British delegate at the UN Sir Anthony Parsons said that a ceasefire would have to be linked to an immediate start on Argentina's withdrawal from the islands. Britain also indicated that any new negotiation would have to start from scratch.

Twenty four hours later, Mrs. Thatcher said in the House of commons that Britain's forces on the ground in the Falkland islands were now moving forward from the San Carlos bridgehead. She added : the object of sending the task force was to re-take by force what was taken from us by force . In fact, Mrs. Thatcher's disclosure of the British movement came less than 24 hours after the Defense Secretary John Nott reported that 5,000 British soldiers were poised for a stab toward Stanley(the capital of the Islands). Mrs. Thatcher went on to say that the objectives were first, repossession of the islands. Second, the restoration of British administration. And third, reconstruction followed by consultation with the islanders about their interests and ideas for the future. Here, Mrs. Thatcher strongly emphasized the need for other countries to be involved in reconstruction and

investment in the islands(in particular U.S.) once British administration is restored. Yes, there were cheers from the Conservatives when she said that British forces were moving forward from the bridgehead at San Carlos, and declared that there could be no question of a British withdrawal. She also recalled that Sir Anthony parsons(the British ambassador to the UN) had voted for the new resolution 505, and she emphasized " the only acceptable condition for a ceasefire is that it should be unequivocable linked with a firm and unconditional Argentine commitment immediately to commence withdrawal of its forces from the islands" . She also. Reaffirmed that a parallel withdrawal of British and Argentine forces was no longer possible.

At the UN, Mr. de Cuellar was officially informed that he had no chance of carrying out the Security

Council's new mandate and achieving a ceasefire between Britain and Argentina within seven days; consequently, it appeared that before his deadline he might go back to report the failure of his mission.

Indeed, Mrs. Thatcher's demands for an unconditional Argentine withdrawal and the restoration of British administration were unacceptable not only to Argentina but to many of Britain's friends. The British demands also left Mr. de Cuellar with no room for maneuver His problem was that : if he gave up and went back to the Council, he might be accused of not making a serious effort to bridge the gap, and if he waited much longer, the Latin American countries would accuse him of procrastinating while British military forces pushed the Argentines out. It was very difficult task for Mr. de Cuellar.

Back to Buenos Aires, it was reported that General Galtieri replied to a message he had received from President Reagan on the anniversary of Argentina's May revolution (May 25th 1982). The message congratulated President Galtieri on the occasion of Argentina's national holiday which President Reagan said in the message: Never has it been more important to reaffirm the common interest and values that unite Argentina and the U.S., and to reiterate our commitment to co-operation in the hemisphere and the world at large. So, in a personal message to President Reagan, President Galtieri said that any affirmation of the common interest and values binding Argentina and the U.S. was incoherent and incomprehensible in the present circumstances.

In fact, the U.S. public's attitude to the Falklands crisis appeared to vary in inverse proportion to

Britain's military successes. So, in dinner conversations and political commentaries in the media the clear cut condemnations of armed aggression had given way to arguments about how a compromise might be achieved, and these arguments assumed that a compromise which takes account of Argentina's claims was both inevitable and justifiable.

Moreover, opinion-formers in the Congress and in the media were asking with increasing urgency the question posed by the Washington Post on May 25th " Just what is Britain fighting for? " . In fact, most American newspapers believed that the British objective of throwing the Argentines off the islands by force was an unnecessary and excessive expression of the principle of non-aggression. Moreover, the key difference between the British and the U.S. positions was that neither the U.S. administration nor the media

have ever accepted Britain's arguments abut sovereignty and self-determination.

From Washington, it was reported that the foreign ministers of the OAS held their second meeting in response to an Argentine request citing the extreme gravity of the Falklands situation ; however, the OAS sources said that a draft resolution being circulated among Latin American delegations in Washington called on the U.S. to stop helping Britain in the Falklands conflict and to lift its economic and military sanctions against Argentina; the resolution also called on Britain to cease military action and withdraw its fleet, and it urged both London and Buenos Aires to renew negotiations within a UN framework.

On May 28th , it was reported from Geneva that Britain vetoed a $ 20 million UN aid package for Argentina ; and in doing so , Britain held up

agreement on millions of dollars of aid for the whole of Latin America . The clash came during a meeting of the governing council of the UN development programme which was reviewing proposals to spend $ 2 billion on 74 countries between 1982 and 1986 , and Britain was due to give only £ 18.5 million to the programme in 1982 – 83 , but the British delegates made it clear that the government would not contribute to Argentina's aid programme . However, in a tense debate , Australia and New Zealand supported Britain ; and Ecuador expressed solidarity with Argentina and denounced the British invasion of Latin American territories . The British veto in Geneva led the OAS to approve a resolution that accused Britain of armed aggression and gave Argentina a diplomatic victory in its war over the Falkland islands .

Twenty four hours later , the foreign ministers of Latin America countries condemned Britain's attack on the islands and urged the U.S. to halt its aid to the British . The vote came at the end of a three-day emergency meeting of the OAS called by Argentina . The action came in 17 - 0 vote with four abstentions at the OAS (U.S. , Chile , Colombia , and Trinidad) who were calling the resolution one sided .

In fact , the action appeared to represent a significant setback to the U.S .relations in Latin America . But in the meantime , the resolution was softened to avoid a complete break with the U.S. , and instead of voting to condemn the U.S. for aiding Britain , the ministers urged Washington to halt its assistance . They also urged the U.S .to order the immediate lifting of the coercive measures applied against Argentina , and called on the U.S. to respect the principle of inter-

American continental solidarity under the Rio-Treaty . The resolution also endorsed efforts by UN Secretary General Mr. de Cuellar to achieve a peaceful settlement .

The U.S. administration was seeking to control the damage to U.S. Latin American relations which had been inflicted by the US's open backing of Britain . From New York , the Newsweek magazine reported:" The secretary of state Mr. Haig and the U.S. ambassador to the UN Mrs. Jeane Kirkpatrick engaged in a bitter 45-minute telephone dispute over U.S. backing for Britain ". In the meantime,the Newsweek magazine said that , in 45-minute telephone conversation Mr. Haig accused Mrs. Kirkpatrick of being mentally and emotionally incapable of thinking clearly on this issues of her close links with Latin America ; but Mrs. Kirkpatrick believed that Mr.

Haig convinced President Reagan that without U.S. support Mrs. Thatcher's Conservative government would fall and be replaced by a leftist government headed by labour leader Mr. Foot . She told Mr. Haig that, he was incapable of understanding Latin America sensibilities and he did not appreciate the U.S. stake in Latin American , and that her job is to serve the President not the Secretary of State . She also characterized Mr. Haig and his aides as amateurs and Brits in city clothes , and she accused him of holding the unrealistic view that :" eventually the Latins will come back to us because they are for the most part right-wing juntas and they don't rest well in beds with Communists ". Mrs. Kirkpatrick had recommended a different approach to the dispute from the outset . She believed that there had been no need for the U.S. to back Britain until mediation

efforts had completely broken down , and its public support for Britain was at enormous cost to the U.S. Latin America relations.

From London, it was reported on May 31st , that Whitehall was making strenuous effort to play down reports of a growing split between Mrs. Thatcher and her foreign secretary Mr. Pym . Indeed , there were differences of emphasis between Mrs. Thatcher and Mr. Pym in their approach to the future of the Falkland islands ; however , the basis for the clash was said to be Mr. Pym's greater readiness to accept Argentina's involvement in a long-term settlement of the Falklands issue , while Mrs. Thatcher took a much harder line , and she was reported to be thinking in terms a plan for development and diversification of the islands economy so as to remove the need for dependence on the mainland . Moreover , Mrs.

Thatcher's relationship with Mr. Pym was not as close as that with Lord Carrington who resigned as Foreign Secretary after failing to_see the Falklands crisis coming .

As for the Soviet – Argentine relations ; it was reported from Buenos Aires that the Soviet ambassador Mr. Sergei Striganov held an unscheduled 40-minute meeting with President Galtieri , and later on he told reporters that the Soviet Union already is helping Argentina politically and diplomatically in the UN Security Council .

Yes ,there was a sense of defeat among the Argentines , and that was clear when the Argentine newspaper La Prensa mentioned the possibility of defeat on the Falklands , but it added that the government of Argentina had decided that the war would continue if port Stanley fell , and warned that the war could be

prolonged and indefinite , moreover, the Buenos Aires newspaper Conviccion which reflects navy policy said that in view of Argentine military successes in the fighting such as the sinking of several British warships , the country's eventual defeat would be very honourable and one of extreme heroism and professional capacity that has surprised the entire world .

On June 2nd 1982 , Mrs. Thatcher on a BBC interview said " Argentina has a few more days to withdraw its troops from the Falkland island before the decisive and most bloody battle of the war begins around the capital Stanley " . She added : there would be no need for a battle for Port Stanley if the Argentines declared their readiness withdraw within 10 to 14 days. " But so far " , she said , I've seen no sign of it , and when they've talked about withdrawal they've talked about it only

the sense that they want to keep some of the fruits of their occupation , and that of course is not acceptable to me . In fact, Mr. Thatcher insisted that, she and the Cabinet had nothing further to say that they could not avert more fighting . She said everything , but everything had been done . She went on to say that she would not use the word magnanimity over the Falklands , Some people were using it (the America have been using this word) to mean that Britain should hand over something to the Argentines , and to do that to an aggressor and fascist dictator would dictator would amount to treachery and a betrayal of our people . Once again she said: After Britain repossesses all of the Falklands , we will rebuild and rehabilitate and develop the islands and increase their population with new settlers . She added , I'm not talking about the Argentines , but others who might be attracted by

development (_she_meant the U.S.) of the Falklands offshore oil and fishing resources . She said this would probably mean eventual independence, and other people would have to respect that independence which would require that the security of the Falklands be guaranteed by a number of countries of whom I hope the U.S. will be one . She also said President Reagan would help especially after Britain agreed to participate in the U.S.-led peacekeeping force that supervised the withdrawal of Israeli troops from the Sinai . She hoped that at least one South American country would participate . She flatly rejected any Argentine role in relation to the islands sovereignty .

Meanwhile , from Buenos, it was reported that two representatives of the Argentine government (Brig . Jose Miret and Rear Admiral Benito Moya) arrived in New York with a number of ideas from the junta in

response to the proposals of the UN secretary-General Mr. de Cuellar ; however , it was believed that one of the Argentine ideas was to be a further concession by Argentina which would accept removal of the British fleet to within 150 miles from the Falklands instead of returning to Britain , and Argentina in exchange would withdraw its troops from the islands and would accept a single UN administration on the islands .

Meanwhile , Britain told members of the Security Council that , it would accept a Falklands ceasefire if Argentina agreed to withdraw all its forces within 14 days . Moreover , Britain's UN ambassador Sir Anthony Parsons said after a meeting with Mr. de Cuellar that what we were seeking and have sought all along is Argentina withdrawal .

On the international level, a serious rift (as the western mass media put it) in Argentina's diplomatic effort

became evident as the Argentine Foreign Minister Dr. Costa Mendez flew to Cuba to attend the meeting of the non-aligned countries . In fact , Dr. Costa Mendez went to Havana to secure Third World sympathy for Argentina's cause and thank President Castro for his personal support for President Galtieri (Cuba offered its full support to Argentina in the Falklands crisis and said the U.S. decision to back Britain in the conflict will bring an end to Latin America cooperation and friendship with the U.S. , Cuba also said the South Atlantic crisis was the product of Anglo-US aggression).

From Peking (China) , it was reported that the declining imperial power was still clinging to policies of gunboat diplomacy. The Chinese commentator Mr. Xinhua said that : It is clear now if Britain recaptures the islands , it could hardly call itself a victor in view of

the heavy political , economic and moral losses. He added , while the British-Argentines rivalry for the Malvinas island has not come to an end , the gigantic British fleet has already lost a quarter of its warships so far the war has cost Britain an alleged sum of £1 bn. In fact , the Chinese reaction the islands was being studied closely in view of the sensitive question of Hong Kong which is administrated by Britain under a quasi – colonial arrangement based on a treaty which China not recognize . The Treaty on Hong Kong's new territories expires in 1997 , but China has given no clear idea what it plans to do then .

On June 4th , it was reported from New York that Argentina made a major concession to Britain . The Argentines agreed to a Security Council draft resolution linking a truce to the simultaneous implementation of Resolution 502 . As for Britain

however, Sir Anthony Parsons told the Council that he welcomed the move , but a few hours later after consulting with London he said that although the resolution had been improved as it stands , it is not improved enough . In fact , the Resolution requested both countries to cease fire immediately and to initiate simultaneously with the ceasefire the implementation of resolution 502 and 505 in their entirety ; it also authorizes the UN Secretary – General to use such means as he may deem necessary to verify the ceasefire and to report to the Security Council within 72 hours .
The British objection to the resolution was that: Britain's delegates expressed the fear that once a ceasefire was in effect, Buenos Aires might renegade on its pledge to pull out its troops or at least stall. Also the British objected to mention of resolution 505 because it suggested in effect that Mr. de Cuellar should revive

the previous UN peace plan .The British would prefer to make their own settlement in the Falklands without UN intervention .(The Resolution introduced into the Council by Spain and Panama whose delegates were in close touch with the Argentine representatives Brig. Miret and Adm. Moya) .

On the international level , it was reported from Paris that Mrs. Thatcher who was alone with Mr. Reagan for a 90-minute meeting at the U.S. ambassador's residence in Paris had said, her talk with Mr. Reagan left her convinced that the U.S. remained very much on Britain's side in the conflict , and she thanked the U.S. for being such staunch allies . Mrs. Thatcher also met the French President privately and she expressed her gratitude for French support .

In the meantime , Mr. Pym (the British Foreign Secretary) said his country was more reassured than

ever before about support for Britain (he meant the U.S. and France) .

Twenty four hours later (June 5th) it was reported from New York that , Britain vetoed a security Council resolution calling for a ceasefire in the Falklands .The vote was nine in favour of the Resolution (China , Ireland , Japan , Panama , Poland , Spain , Uganda , the Soviet Union , and Zaire) voted for the resolution); with France , Guyana , Jordan and Togo abstained ; and Britain and the U.S. opposed ; but a few minutes later the U.S. ambassador Mr. Kirkpatrick told the Council : I've been requested by my Government to record the fact that were it possible to change our vote . She added: We should like to change it from a Veto – a no , that is – to an abstention ;later on , Mr. Charles Lichenstein (her deputy) told reporters that : Mr. Haig sent instructions from Paris where he was

attending the Western European summit conference to change our vote , but we received them too late .

Indeed, the basis of the resolution was introduced by Spain and Panama ; but Spain and Panama tried to meet the British demands by including a call for the simultaneous implementation , along with a ceasefire of Resolution 502 of April 3rd , which demanded Argentine withdrawal. But the British Ambassador to the UN Sir Anthony Parsons told the Council that there is no direct and inseparable link between the ceasefire and immediate Argentine withdrawal within a fixed time limit . He also add : the wording of the resolution would enable Argentina to reopen the endless process of negotiation , thus leaving the Argentine armed forces in illegal occupation of parts of the islands , and this is totally unacceptable to my government .

As regards the U.S. Vote :

The episode of the U.S. vote was not the first , however , it recalled an incident in March 1980 when the U.S. joined all the other members of the Council in voting for a resolution that called on Israel to dismantle settlements established in occupied Arab lands , but a few days later President Carter said there had been a communications failure and the U.S. delegation then led by Mr. Donald Mchenry should have abstained . But here , Mrs. Kirkpatrick said it is perfectly clear that the problem arose out of the effort of my government's officials operating from arrive at decisions on the basis if the latest British decisions . She added : the U.S. was not informed until late in the afternoon of Britain's decision not to explore further amendments to the resolution and to cast a veto . Mrs. Kirkpatrick added : immediately before I entered the

Security Council , officials in Washington reaffirmed that I should cast a veto , but they had not yet succeeded in reaching Mr. Haig for a final discussion . In fact Mrs. Kirkpatrick attempted to balance conflicting pressures on America from British and Latin America camps , and her own view had been to abstain , so , she had tried to persuade Mr. Haig to support this view but Mr. Haig was adamant .

However , when the time came to vote , Mrs. Kirkpatrick complied reluctantly and cast the U.S. veto .but moments later she was announcing to a startled Council that the U.S. wished to change its vote . Her explanation later was that : owing to poor communication with Paris , she had been unable to consult Haig as closely as she would have liked . At any rate it had ended with a victory for Mrs. Kirkpatrick but the victory perhaps had come too late .

As for Mr. Haig: he had discussed the resolution by telephone with Deputy Secretary of State Mr. Walter Stoessel after 11 pm in Franc (5 pm in Washington) on June 4th , as well as with Mr. Thomas 0. Enders (the Assistant Secretary of State in Washington); both however , supported Mr. Kirkpatrick's view and recommended an abstention . Mr. Haig then called Mr. Pym who was out with Mrs. Thatcher , and then he called the State Department in Washington and gave the instruction that Mrs. Kirkpatrick should abstain . So by the time Mr. Haig reached Mr. Pym and Mr. Clark , he believed that the instruction had been carried out , and he learned a few moments later that the message had failed to reach Mrs. Kirkpatrick in time. Mr. Haig , however , tried to shrug it off especially when he said : It is not a major issue whether it was a veto or an abstention . He added : the

resolution did not justify a veto because it was very close to something we could have accepted , though it was lacking in specificity. As a result , the British officials were divided as to whether they should be furious with Mr. Haig , or grateful that this highly-public dithering had so decisively removed the spotlight from Mrs. Thatcher's adamant refusal to halt the military effort outside Port Stanley.

Now, what the resolution said:

(1) It requests the parties to the dispute to cease fire immediately in the region of the Falkland islands and to initiate simultaneously with the ceasefire , the implementation of resolution 502 and 505 in their entirety .

(2) It authorises the Secretary-General to use such means as he may deem necessary to verify compliance with this resolution.

(3) Requests the Secretary-General to submit an interim report to the Security Council within 72 hours and keep the Council informed concerning the implementation of this resolution.

As a result of the U.S. attitude , it was reported that for the first time in anyone's recollection , Latin America countries (Left, Right and Center) had drawn together in outrage and were portraying the U.S. as the aggressor working with the Anglo-Saxons . In fact, the U.S. administration feared this would become even more damaging if Britain persisted in fighting Argentina to the finish . In the meantime,
the U.S. policymaker felt that the British government has been insensitive to the U.S .and Latin America interests . They also believed that the British should have made more effort to agree a ceasefire with Argentina . But the British officials privately resented

what they regarded as Washington's efforts to tell them to run war and suspected that the U.S. was more interested in placating Latin America then helping its closest ally . As a result , Washington's policy differences with London become headline news , added to this Mrs. Kirkpatrick brought her differences with Mr. Haig to President Reagan . But what happened at their meeting has not been disclosed , but a number of developments had been publicised , such as Mr. Haig's speech when he said American interests were more heavily engaged in the Falklands dispute than even the interests of two parties and that the U.S. had sided with Britain only in frustration . Moreover , when Mrs. Thatcher proposed that the U.S. should participate in an international police force once the islands were re-taken , the U.S. poured cold water on the plan when

Washington said it would only be interested as part of an agreement with Argentina .

From Europe, it was reported from Versailles (France) on June 6th , that Mrs. Thatcher had won a major declaration of support for her Falklands policy at the Versailles economic summit (she was referring to the U.S. and France); so, speaking for all seven government leaders (U.S. , Canada , France ,West German , U.K. , Italy and Japan) President Mitterrand of France said the U.K. had been the victim of aggression and its national interest and national pride have been injured . He added: the U.K. must recover what it has lost , and we shall do everything we can to make sure that peace will prevail over war .

But from Havana (Cuba), it was different story . It was reported that the non-aligned movement approved a resolution that deplored the British offensive to

retake the islands and demanded an immediate end to the U.S. support of Britain . The final wording of the resolution by the movement's coordinating bureau at the end of six–day conference represented a compromise between hard-liners who demanded condemnation of Britain , and commonwealth members whom protested at Argentina's use of force in seizing the islands .

In fact , any gathering of the Non-aligned Movement usually dramatises the extend to which the U.S. is isolated from the world's have-nots , although the U.S. has some friends within the movement such as Pakistan , Singapore , Malaysia and Jamaica ; but they seem to lack the tenacity and organizational abilities of America's opponents , most notably Cuba . Indeed , the most significant development in Cuba's three-year chairmanship of the 94 member movement (which

ended in Sep . 1982) was the signs of a Cuban alliance with Argentina . The two countries had represented opposite poles within the movement , but that has been changed by Cuba's vigorous embrace of Argentina's position in the South Atlantic crisis, coupled with the U.S. support for the British stand . So, the Argentine Foreign Minister Dr. Costa became the first Argentine Minister to visit Havana since Cuban revolution and it was just recently when Argentina a trade agreement with Cuba which had been suspended following the 1976 military coup , and it has also agreed to open a $100 m. credit line to help finance the export of Argentine manufactured goods to Cuba . Indeed , in the last tow months (April and May 1982) , Havana had emerged as one of the strongest supporters of Argentina with which it had tense relations before the dispute ; it also took the lead in mobilizing sympathy

for Argentina at a meeting of the Non-aligned . In fact, Cuban officials had also argued that despite their political differences , Latin American countries have been drawn together as never before by the issue . Here, Dr. Castro said, the Falklands had stirred the most nationalist Latin Americanist sentiments that I've ever known. Another Cuban official said : I believe that Washington's decision to support Britain in the crisis had damaged the entire concept of an inter-American system linking the U.S. and Latin America and has weakened the Inter-American Treaty of Mutual assistance. The official added: whatever happens , things will never be the same again . Indeed , the Latin America's anger and frustration over Falklands was directed even more against the U.S. than Britain . It also led Cuba to jump at the opportunity to pull closer to the rest of Latin America including the old friends

such as Mexico , Nicaragua , Grenada and Panama . The crisis had also brought to the Latins positive results , specifically the withdrawal of Argentine military advisers from El-Salvador and Guatemala where they were providing counter-insurgency training to local armies , and from Honduras where they helping bands of anti-Sandinista Nicaraguan exiles . Moreover , the public emphasis of Cuban solidarity also appeared to be part of Argentina's general diplomatic manoeuvring aimed at putting pressure on Washington to adopt a more neutral line . It was also aimed at strengthening the arguments of the Latin Americanists within the Reagan administration who feared an escalation of the Falklands conflict ,and the eradication of the U.S. presence in Latin America , as well as growing Soviet bloc influence .

On June 7th it was reported from London that the British government had rejected the U.S. proposals for the long-term future of the Falklands islands involving talks with Argentina over sovereignty . However , according to the London weekend Television programme "weekend world", President Reagan presented Mrs. Thatcher with the outline of a new U.S. plan to settle the immediate future of the Falklands , once full British control had been restored .

The plan presented to Mrs. Thatcher in Versaille before the opening of the summit conference was consistent with the British government's wish to broaden responsibility for the islands by inviting countries such as the U.S. and Brazil to help guarantee its future , but the price demanded of London by Washington was the reopening with Argentina of the

sovereignty issue within six months of a ceasefire . Anyhow , the U.S. plan called for the following points:

(1) The withdrawal of the British task force from the southern hemisphere once hostilities were over.

(2) A temporary administration made up of Britain , U.S. , Brazil and Jamaica .

(3) The recognition by Britain that the Falklands had a special and unique status . (the other two points had been disclosed) .

But Mr. Cecil Parkinson (very close to Mrs. Thatcher and chairman of the Conservative Party) said that British public opinion had changed during the crisis and would no longer accept any role for Argentina on the Falklands . In fact he ruled out any arrangement such as multinational administration which could become , as he saw it , a step towards negotiations with

Argentina . Instead he said that having re-possessed the islands , Britain would then take steps to keep them . He added , independence was one option and hoped other countries would contribute to security to ensure peace and stability in the region . He also said , there would have to be a British garrison in the short-term .

Twenty four hours later (June 8^{th}) , it was reported from London that Mrs. Thatcher won what she most wanted and most urgently needed from President Reagan's historic visit to Westminster and Whitehall , a ringing declaration of American support for the broad objectives of Britain's stand in the Falkland Islands which effectively obliterated the increasingly obvious differences between Whitehall and Washington over the future of the islands . However, in an address to MPs and peers in the Royal Gallery of the Palace of Westminster(500 member of the

British Parliament) President Reagan defending Britain's military campaign in the Falklands when he said : Its young men were not being sacrificed for lumps of rock and earth thousands of miles from home but to resist Argentine aggression . Indeed, President Reagan was the first U.S. President to address the House of commons and the House of Lords jointly including Mrs. Thatcher and Mr. Michael Foot , the Leader of the opposition labour party (but most labour members boycotted the address) . His audience was delighted by his words on the Falklands crisis. As a result, Mrs. Thatcher told MPs that her government now had every intention of recovering by force what the Argentine junta had resolutely refused to give up by diplomatic negotiation .So, in a commons statement, Mrs. Thatcher said the U.S. is standing behind Britain in the action we are

taking in the Falkland, and is given us very substantial practical help as we would expect from a staunch ally. However, she ruled out any Argentine involvement in a long-term settlement, and she rejected a call from Lobour leader Mr. Foot that the government should try and get a new resolution through the UN, and she defended Britain's veto of the Security Council ceasefire call which Mr. Foot had denounced as an abuse of the veto.

Meanwhile, it was reported from Buenos Aires that, Argentina would withdraw its troops only if Britain did so too, and handed control of the islands for a period to the UN . Here President Guiltier warned Britain that Argentina would fight on for years for control of the islands, and in an interview with Spanish newspaper he said: supported by Hispanic and many other peoples in the world, Argentina is

ready to continue with the war for as many months or years as it is necessary.

On June 9th, Mrs. Thatcher in one of a series of radio and television interviews for American broadcasting organization rounded off President Reagan's visit by renewing her call for some kind of unidentified support for a multinational defence force on the Falklands after the expected British victory. She told her interviewer from the NBG network: if we cannot get any other arrangement we shall have to arrange ourselves for the defence of those islands, it will mean that, she added: we will have to make a number of quite considerable expenditures such as deploying anti-aircraft missiles, submarines, and some ships.

In fact, Mr. Haig (the U.S. Secretary of State) had made it clear several times that the U.S. would not feel able to participate in any international force to

guarantee the security of the islands, except in the context of an agreement by Britain to negotiate on their future with the Argentine.

Indeed, Mrs. Thatcher first recalled that Britain had acceded to an American request to provide troops for the Sinai peace-keeping force, and than said she was sure that, if asked, the U.S. would do the same for the Falklands. But if Mrs. Thatcher had in mind a UN peacekeeping force to which Argentina agreed, that is one matter, but she was talking of the permanent stationing of British forces on the islands, of long-term economic development plans, of bringing back the Governor General. In such circumstances any peacekeeping force would be an occupation force under British control, not one with duties and authority spelled out by agreement of both sides, as is the case in the Sinai. In fact, there was a fundamental

difference between the Sinai and the Falklands. Britain's participation in the Sinai should not be seen primarily as a favour to the U.S. because the British in actual fact have strong national interests in what happened in the Sinai, even if they are reluctant to shoulder their responsibilities in the Middle East. It has been easier for the EEC especially Britain to let the U.S shoulder the entire burden in the Middle East, but peace in the Middle East is of cardinal importance to all members of the Atlantic alliance, even Britain which has its own supplies of oil. By contrast, the U.S. has no abiding concern about the fate of the Falklands, and anything it does there is strictly to help Britain out of its predicament. Apparently Mrs. Thatcher did not realize this because she was carried away by her rhetoric about teaching the Argentines a lesson(as she put it, aggression does not pay), but

more relevant is that it was British interests and her own political fate that were at stake.

From Buenos Aires, however, it was reported that South American leaders were already taking steps and pondering others to adjust to the conditions they believed the continent might face in the aftermath of Falkland islands crisis; however, the principal perception motivating them was that the U.S. can no longer be fully trusted as an ally and that they must strengthen their own defenses and build more regional cooperation . It was believed that an Argentine defeat would almost certainly serve to broaden the effects of the war on the area; in the meantime, it was reported that military establishments in various countries were already using the war as an excuse to press for greater manpower and equipment.

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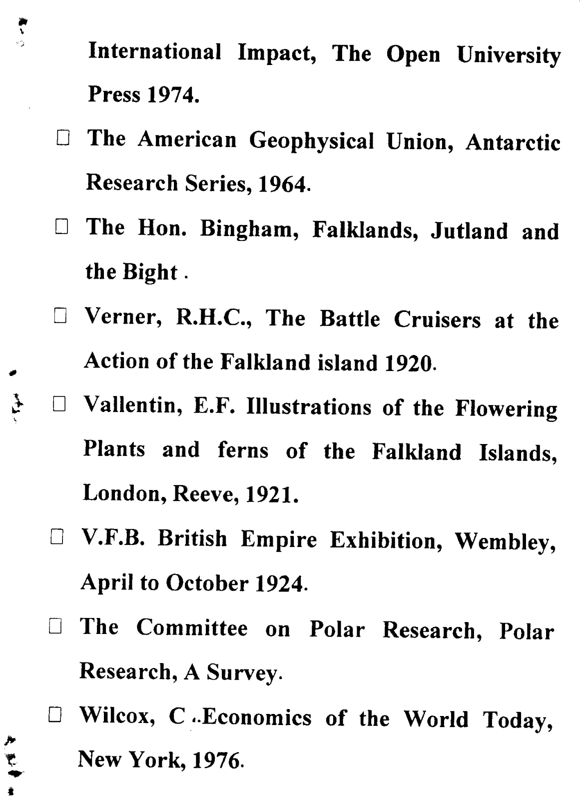
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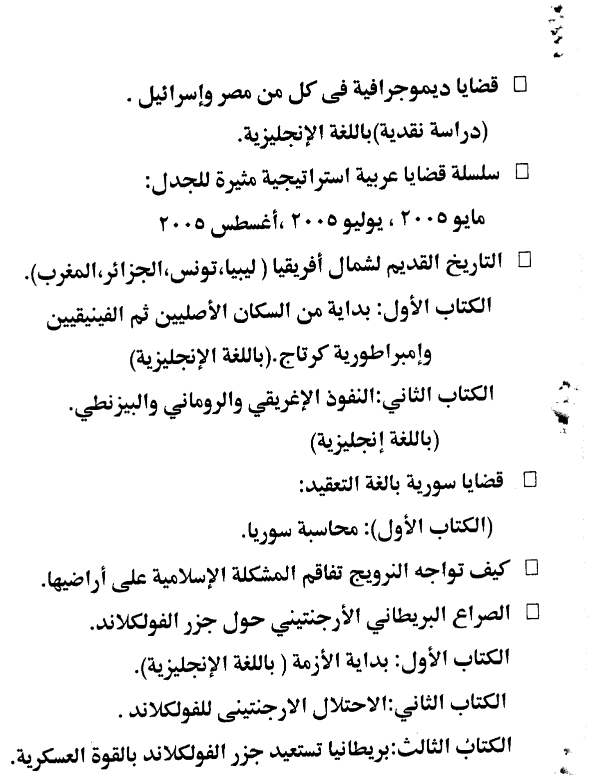
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صدر للمؤلف

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